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DEDICATORY PREFACE

To Arnold Daly

LELAND·STANFORD·JVNIOR·VNIVERSITY

THE MASTER

THE MASTER BY HERMANN BAHR ADAPTED FOR THE AMERICAN STAGE BY BENJAMIN F GLAZER

Stage Library

Philadelphia NICHOLAS L BROWN *1918*

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DEDICATORY PREFACE

To Arnold Daly

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Dear Arnold Daly:

No publication of this play would be complete that failed to acknowledge its debt to you. And that debt, strangely enough, does not consist in the fact that you acted the play so admirably, but that you acted it at all.

Looking backward, it may not seem to the casual observer that there was any especial merit in having sponsored a play which won a critical reception as overwhelmingly favorable as that accorded "The Master." But the casual observer is not a competent witness of theatrical affairs. He does not realize how utterly the American stage is given over to the broad, the sentimental, the commonplace. He cannot know, as you know, how scrupulously the average American "star" actor shrinks from a rôle that savors of the intellectual.

The adventures of this play in manuscript—and I daresay many meritorious play-manuscripts have fared worse—may elucidate the point. I finished the adaptation at St. Ives in Cornwall during the Summer of 1912. On my return to this country, in October of the same year, it was offered to a very prominent New York manager, and immediately accepted for production. This manager was most enthusiastic about the play until someone—I think it was the third assistant publicity manager—whispered the fatal word "Highbrow!" and his enthusiasm forthwith subsided. At this point I, too, lost interest; and the destinies of the manuscript were

left in the capable hands of my very zealous agent. Not until four years later—in August of 1916, to be exact—was the play accepted for production by Mrs. Henry B. Harris, and was actually produced at Cleveland in October of the same year.

In the interim it was energetically peddled from manager to actor and from actor to manager by my optimistic agent. There may be one or two "stars" who did not refuse the play before you saw it; if so, the omission was unintentional. And yet its reception was varied.

One actor, who had left his fiftieth birthday behind him, decided that the title rôle was too old for him. Another invited me down to his country home to rewrite the play under his direction. A third was afraid that he was too short to play the part; whether in talent or in stature he did not specify. A fourth contended that it was a subordinate rôle because it failed to enlist the sympathy of the audiences. So it went. To no avail did my agent point out that Hermann Bahr was one of the most popular dramatists on the Continent; that "The Master" had been in the repertoire of most of the eminent European actors for a dozen years or more. The American "star" would have none of it.

With the managers he fared no better, which is not surprising. After all, the history of the American theatre holds little to encourage the manager in the quest of plays of authentic literary or dramatic merit. Few managers pretend to be artists or even patrons of art, and most of them are quite frankly business men and nothing else. Even Mrs. Harris was dubious about the commercial prospects of "The Master." At the very outset she said to me: "I do not expect to make money on this play; I shall not be surprised if I lose heavily;

but the play is worth it." And she meant it. I wonder if any American manager ever said that before.

Meantime you had read the play and marked it for your own. It only remained for my agent to bring you and her together.

We had been solemnly warned against you. Every manner of crime of temper and of temperament was charged against you. We were told it was your custom to leave a company without notice at the most awkward times; that quite probably you would fly in a rage some day and tear the scenery into shreds; that you ate a leading lady for luncheon every day; that you were the terror of actors, the despair of managers and the anathema of authors. Really, I gathered that you were at once the most discreditable and the most respected actor in America.

Judge of my relief to find that rumor had slandered you so grievously. Yet it was not difficult to discover a fancied basis for the slander. There was about you that nervous energy—so disconcerting to smug people—which vented itself in many unanticipated ways. It inspired your associates while it awed them. You could be intolerant, but only with incompetence; you could be caustic, but only toward mediocrity; you could proclaim your opinions with irritating assurance, but I have never met a man quicker to accept a fruitful suggestion or keener, for that matter, to nail the fallacy of an erroneous one. It was soon clear to me that commonplace people must hate you heartily. I ruefully acknowledge that there were moments when I hated you like that.

At rehearsals I used to marvel at your well nigh infallible instinct for the right posture, the most eloquent gesture, the most convincing shading of a line. You seemed to feel rather than to reason the solution of each

technical problem, whether of your own or of your associates, to whom you were ever helpful and considerate. But I could not be sure that this infallibility of yours was always as instinctive as it seemed. I marked, for instance, how thorough you were in committing your lines to memory. Another member of the company might be content to speak a substituted word, an inverted phrase. Not you. If there was the slightest doubt about the least material word, your quick ear caught it, and you had immediate recourse to the prompt-book. And in the end you read the part with not a comma out of place. That, I told myself, is the difference between an artist and an actor.

It was the same at public performances. I thought you should never be through with your psychic experiments on the public. Tonight you played a scene one way, and tomorrow another. And always some occult perception in you seemed to be waiting and watching for the emotional response that would give you the answer you sought. Even after the New York premier, when the praise that was accorded you should certainly have satisfied you, I thought I saw you still experimenting. And to me it was the supreme proof of your artistry that you were the severest critic of your own work.

I am proud to have been the means of introducing to the American theatre, through the medium of your matchless art, the master work of Hermann Bahr. And I gratefully acknowledge that on the stage you have magnified and transfigured whatever merit there is in this adaptation.

BENJAMIN F. GLAZER.

THE ORIGINAL CAST, as produced under the direction of the Estate of Henry B. Harris at the Fulton Theatre, New York City, December 5, 1916:

(In the order of their appearance)

IDA WAYNE ..... FLORENCE OAKLEY
CLEMENS ..... CHARLES HALTON
KATHERINE, *wife of Arthur Wessley*.. EDYTH LATIMER
ARTHUR WESSLEY ..... ARNOLD DALY
DR. EVANS ..... PHILIP WOOD
DR. ROKORO ..... EDWARD ABELES
MORTIMER WEEKS, *editor of "The Faun,"* ROYAL BYRON
JULIET, *wife of Raymond Wessley*.. EDNA MAY OLIVER
HON. PETER BROOKSON, *the Mayor*.. WILLIAM FREDERIC
DR. RAYMOND WESSLEY, *Director of Public Health* CARL ECKSTROM
DR. KLAUDER, *Pres. of the Medico-Surgical College* GEORGE GASTON
EUGENE THOMPSON ..... RAMSAY WALLACE

Produced under the direction of Ira Hards

PERSONS

ARTHUR WESSLEY.
KATHERINE, *his wife.*
DR. RAYMOND WESSLEY, *Director of Public Health.*
JULIET, *his wife.*
DR. ROKORO.
EUGENE THOMPSON.
DR. EVANS.
IDA WAYNE.
DR. KLAUDER, *President of the Medico-Surgical College.*
HON. PETER BROOKSON, *the Mayor.*
MORTIMER WEEKS, *editor of "The Faun."*
CLEMENS.

The action takes place during two consecutive days in Arthur Wessley's private hospital on the outskirts of a small city.

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ACT I

Arthur Wessley's study is a high-ceilinged, old-fashioned room on the ground floor of a private hospital. Broad French windows at back look out upon a garden; before them is a long, low table bearing charts, papers, bottles, orthopedic appliances and a large vase; heavy chairs stand on three sides of it. The walls at right and left are lined with practical book-shelves containing books. At left is an old Dutch cabinet of carved wood; opposite it is a huge chest of drawers, on which stands a bust of Socrates.

Up left a heavy door opens into a corridor, which leads to the outer door, the stairs and hospital wards. Another and smaller door at right leads into a bathroom. Down right there is a wide fireplace, with brass fender and andirons, topped by a mantelpiece, on which stand a few brass candlesticks and a framed photograph of Katherine.

A sofa stands slantwise opposite the fireplace, and near it a reading lamp on a pedestal. A cloth-covered novel lies open upon the sofa. Down left there is a small table upon which is a typewriting machine, and beside it a blotting-pad, with pen and ink. Otherwise the room is furnished tastefully and with an eye for solid comfort. The time is about seven o'clock of a fine Summer morning.

At the rise of the curtain Clemens is discovered, dusting the room. He is fifty-five, gray-haired, speaks with a faint German accent. Presently Ida enters at

left with newspapers, which she puts on the larger table, and letters which she carries to the smaller table. She is twenty-three, slender and rather pale, and pretty in a dark, wistful way.

IDA: Isn't the master up yet?

CLEMENS: [*points to the door at right*] In his bath.

IDA: And you are just cleaning up!

CLEMENS: I couldn't do it any sooner; he occupied the room. [*disapprovingly*] Up all night again.

IDA: [*glances at the book on the couch*] Two difficult operations yesterday, yet he sits up all night reading detective stories.

CLEMENS: It's a wonder he don't make himself sick by it. [*Ida sits at the smaller table, begins to open and read the mail.*]

CLEMENS: Did you see what it says in the papers this morning?

IDA: [*without looking up*] Yes.

CLEMENS: Professor! [*shakes his head*] How things do change! When you think that a short time ago . . . you can really say the whole city was against him—the newspapers, the authorities . . . and the scandal with his own brother——

IDA: [*looks up from a letter, thoughtfully*] And he only laughed.

CLEMENS: What *doesn't* he laugh at?

IDA: He will laugh at this, too. [*flourishes the letter*] His brother, the Director of Health, writes that he is coming with the Mayor and the President of the Faculty to pay his respects to the new professor. [*puts the letter carefully aside, separate from the rest.*]

CLEMENS: Yes, it will be different now. All against him, him against everybody—and he has won. Oh, it is wonderful!

IDA: [*with pride*] He made them come to him.

CLEMENS: I'm most glad on account of the missus. He—my God, he don't care what they do or say, but the dear lady must have suffered, even if she didn't show it. . . .

IDA: Yes, Clemens, but go on with your work; you're late.

CLEMENS: [*dusting*] It used to be so lonely for her here—just like in a prison. You don't know what kind of a life she was used to in the old country. He was only a poor student then, but she was rich and of a fine family and plenty of friends, and——

IDA: [*annoyed*] You have told me so often!

CLEMENS: Yes, Miss Ida, those were happy days for all of us. And all of a sudden he brings us here . . . like in a prison . . . not a soul to visit us——

IDA: You forget Mr. Thompson.

CLEMENS: Yes, Mr. Thompson! He stuck to us from the beginning. The master should be thankful to him for it, too.

IDA: [*warningly*] Hmm!

[*Katherine enters from left. She is twenty-five, tall, fair-haired, her habitual air of quiet self-possession accentuated by the white nurse's uniform she wears. She carries flowers.*]

KATHERINE: Isn't Mr. Wessley down yet? [*goes to the larger table, arranges the flowers in the vase.*]

CLEMENS: [*points to the door at right*] Yes, ma'am, he comes soon.

IDA: Good morning, Mrs. Wessley.

KATHERINE: Good morning, Ida. [*bends over the vase*] Aren't you excited over the news?

IDA: There is more news—a letter from the master's brother in this morning's mail.

KATHERINE: [*without turning*] Read it to me.

IDA: [*reads*] "My dear brother, no doubt you have by this time learned from the public prints that it is the intention of the Medico-Surgical College to honor you with the degree of Professor of Surgery. Need I say that I am deeply gratified by the news that you will be so honored, and profoundly thankful that the opposition my public office has heretofore compelled me to show toward you may now be withdrawn. It will be my pleasure to present myself at your house this morning, in the company of His Honor, the Mayor, Dr. Klauder and my wife, to congratulate you in person. Very cordially yours, Raymond Wessley."

CLEMENS: Erlauben gnädige Frau, dass ich halt auch herzlichst——

KATHERINE: Thank you, Clemens.

CLEMENS: It is a good fortune for us all.

KATHERINE: Yes, my good Clemens, and you did your share to help.

CLEMENS: It was terrible . . . Well, thank God, it's over now.

KATHERINE: [*finished with the flowers*] Did you find it so hard to bear as that? [*half to herself; reflectively*] I don't know. It's strange! [*starts to go.*]

IDA: Will the visitors stay to luncheon?

KATHERINE: Oh, perhaps we ought to be prepared in any event. Will you attend to it?

IDA: Five extra?

KATHERINE: Yes, five. What time is the operation this morning?

IDA: At nine.

KATHERINE: Then I shall have a look at that boy in number seven first. If my husband asks for me, I am in

seven. [*going*] Don't let him forget the operation again, will you? [*exits at left.*]

CLEMENS: There is one thing I would like to know. Do you think we ought to call him professor from now on?

IDA: He doesn't need that title. He is more than professor.

CLEMENS: But professor sounds something higher than master. I never understood why he calls himself master, master of surgery.

IDA: They wouldn't let him call himself doctor.

CLEMENS: Yes, but *master.* In the German language *meister*—that means something. But here in America when they say master they mean a little boy.

IDA: Perhaps that is why he chose it.

[*Arthur enters at right, wrapped in a bathrobe.*]

ARTHUR: [*to Clemens*] My coffee—quick. [*lights a cigarette; approaches Ida. Clemens exits.*] Morning, Ida. [*indicating the letters*] What new work have you got for me?

IDA: Enough for a month.

ARTHUR: Oh!

IDA: [*deprecatingly*] If you would only take care of yourself, master. [*Arthur smiles*] Up all night again!

ARTHUR: "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." Wonderful book! Makes me wish I were a detective myself. Well, what time *today.*

IDA: At nine. And Mrs. Wessley warned me not to let you forget again.

ARTHUR: [*smiles*] Did she? It's that boy in number seven, isn't it? Poor little devil. [*goes up right to the door*] Did you send Mr. Clayborne that receipted bill yesterday?

IDA: Of course, master.

ARTHUR: We were well paid for that case, eh?

IDA: Yes, it was an enormous fee you charged him.

ARTHUR: I wasn't thinking of the money.

IDA: What else?

ARTHUR: Unsophisticated child! Do you suppose I am being made a professor because the learned faculty has suddenly learned to love me? Lord, no! Clayborne, the boss, grateful for my cure of his crippled son, gives the order; and lo! I am a professor of the same college that yesterday called me quack. Isn't it delicious?

IDA: Oh, there is a letter from your brother about it.

ARTHUR: My . . . ?

IDA: Your brother, the Director of Health. He writes that he is coming to congratulate you with his wife, the Mayor and the President of the Faculty.

ARTHUR: [*after a pause*] That's just like him. Always first to follow the band wagon. And he'll expect me to welcome him, too, with open arms. Poor Raymond!

[*He exits at right. Ida begins to typewrite. Clemens enters at left with coffee things, which he places on the table by the sofa, and exits. Evans enters at left. He is twenty-seven, timid, nervous, mild-mannered; wears black-rimmed nose glasses which he is constantly removing and wiping.*]

EVANS: Good morning, Miss Ida. [*Ida nods shortly*] Is the professor——?

IDA: The *master* will soon be here.

EVANS: [*startled*] Of course; that is whom I meant. [*eagerly*] Have you spoken to him about it yet?

IDA: About what?

EVANS: [*points to the pile of newspapers*] Haven't you seen it? It is equivalent to an official announce-

ment! And it seems to me that on such an occasion we might contrive in some way to . . . make some little demonstration of our admiration and homage for the master. Just fancy, Miss Ida, Professor of Surgery! And for three years they wouldn't grant him the degree of simple doctor. . . . [*sees that she takes no notice; gulps; starts again*] Miss Ida, it is a triumph, too, for all of us—in a certain sense. When the master was in disrepute it was a reflection, you know, on all of us, and——

IDA: Oh, you are always being belittled! [*goes to the cabinet, takes out a ledger and looks into it.*]

EVANS: [*reproachfully*] Why do you say that, Miss Ida?

IDA: [*closes the ledger, replaces it, closes the door of the cabinet*] Oh, nothing.

EVANS: Well, *isn't* this a great honor; a complete justification for us all?

IDA: Then why on earth are you so melancholy about it?

EVANS: It's only my manner, Miss Ida. I can't help it, you know.

IDA: Yes, I know. [*passes him with her head averted; returns to the little table. Evans looks after her sorrowfully.*]

EVANS: If you only would have a little patience with me, Miss Ida . . . it would be easier for me to——

[*stops, for the clatter of the machine disturbs him. He removes his glasses and wipes them before he continues, nervously.*]

For a long time past I have wanted to tell you, but somehow . . . I haven't the talent for expressing myself . . . I have hoped that if you could [*searches for a*

word, then gives it up with a sorrowful laugh] I must sound ridiculous. After what the master said——

[*stops as he hears footsteps, and withdraws a pace or two. Ida stops typewriting. Arthur enters at right, fully dressed, pours himself some coffee, and sits on the sofa to drink it. Then he sees Evans for the first time.*]

ARTHUR: The lovers! Well, when will the wedding be?

EVANS: [*stammering*] Yes, we should like . . . that is *I* should like——

ARTHUR: [*opens a newspaper*] You two give me a pain! How far have you progressed, doctor?

EVANS: [*with a bashful glance at Ida*] Well, you see . . . Miss Ida . . . has not——

ARTHUR: No, no! Time enough for that. I am talking about the analysis.

EVANS: Oh! that, master? It is progressing nicely.

ARTHUR: It has been progressing nicely for quite a time, but I don't see any results.

EVANS: I haven't spent as much time on it as I should have liked to. I have been kept quite busy, you see, about the hospital.

ARTHUR: Don't you worry about the hospital. How often must I tell you that you will never be a surgeon? You may have head enough, but it is the *hand* you lack. The moment I laid eyes on you I knew you were a born theoretical man. Stick to your theory, doctor. Work on your book, analyze, explain, expound my method, write a learned treatise on it; tell them who I am and what I can do—that's your line. Take my advice and stick to it. I know what's best for you.

EVANS: I know you do, master, and I am extremely grateful. But I am not certain——

ARTHUR: Of course you're not. That's your trouble. You would like to do things, but you are afraid this, and perhaps that, and so you fritter your life away. Be firm. Make up your mind—and keep it made up. That is the only way. Take Miss Ida for example. It was the same story. She had all sorts of conflicting notions about careers and noble things like that——

IDA: [*bitterly*] You put them out of my head in short order.

ARTHUR: And today you are better off for it.

IDA: [*sorrowfully*] Yes.

ARTHUR: [*marking her tone*] It hurts at first to give up one's ambitions—silly as they may be. That's human nature. But the whole secret of success is to find out what you can do best, and do that alone. You were a poor, lonely musician, with vague ambitions to become a virtuoso. Today you are a remarkably competent secretary. Renunciation is what we all must learn. Don't look at me so wonderingly. I—I am different. All people are not alike. And what is more, perhaps I, too, practice renunciation—in my fashion.

EVANS: What you say is quite true, of course; and I shall exert myself——

ARTHUR: That's right. Exert yourself; but more quickly.

EVANS: I will do my utmost, professor; you may rely on that.

ARTHUR: No. Let us stick to master. In more formal society you may call me professor, if you like, but here, between ourselves, the old name will do very well, thank you. . . . My dear doctor, I cured some two thousand supposedly incurable cripples and the learned gentlemen of the city refused me the degree of simple doctor, but called me a quack and a faker. Now, because I have

straightened out the hip of the son of a millionaire politician I am transformed over night into a professor of surgery. Isn't it amusing? And isn't it a striking example of the emptiness of honors and titles in this world? No, doctor, we don't need their high-sounding names. One becomes a professor over night you see; but one must have been *born* a *master* and proved it by the work of one's brain and hand.

IDA: Here is the list. I am going out to post these letters. [*exits at left.*]

ARTHUR: [*picks up the list and glances over it*] Take that little girl for example. She has succeeded because she listened to reason. Now, if she had followed her own inclinations . . . She was barely twenty when she came to me, and stuffed full of lofty ideals about her Art and the like. But I said: "Nonsense! You have no talent for music. Stay here." And she obeyed me. . . . How are you two getting on?

EVANS: I ardently hope that Miss Ida——

ARTHUR: Stop hoping and *do* something. You two were made for each other. Get married. Then you can go about your scientific researches in peace, and she can keep on with *her* work. What better can you wish?

EVANS: You must have a little patience with me, master. I want to follow your advice . . . only—— [*stops, embarrassed.*]

ARTHUR: Only what?

EVANS: Only it is . . . I mean it must be handled very delicately, because I am not certain——[*stops, embarrassed.*]

ARTHUR: [*impatiently*] Of what?

[*Dr. Rokoro enters rapidly from left; hesitates, as if he fears he is intruding. He is Japanese; twenty-four; smooth, thick, black hair; broad forehead; his*

high arched brows and enormous silver-rimmed spectacles give his face a quizzical, owlish appearance. His English is correct, but marred by a pronounced Japanese accent. When excited he speaks disconnectedly, in short, hesitating words and phrases. He is dressed in American fashion, very correctly.]

EVANS: First I must be certain—certain that—— [*stops as he sees Rokoro.*]

ARTHUR: [*To Rokoro*] I'll be with you in a moment, little doctor. [*to Evans*] Well, what is it you are not certain of? Quickly!

EVANS: I—I must first be sure that Miss Ida—— [*looks bashfully at Rokoro, who thereupon starts discreetly to retire.*]

ARTHUR: Wait! Stay where you are, little doctor. [*impatiently; to Evans*] This is no secret. What you are trying to say is that you are not sure she loves you. [*Evans nods*] But I have spoken to her, and she is satisfied to marry you. What more?

EVANS: [*mournfully*] Still——

ARTHUR: Well? [*Rokoro withdraws to the bookshelves; pretends to read.*]

EVANS: [*softly*] Master, you know I trust you. I have obeyed you in all things, often at a sacrifice—of certain plans and . . . hopes that I cherished dearly. . . . Yet, in a matter of this sort . . . which concerns my whole life's happiness . . . should I not . . . *must* I not consult my own feelings before *anyone's* else?

ARTHUR: And your own feelings?

EVANS: My feelings? Long before you spoke to me I cared for Miss Ida . . . very much.

ARTHUR: Well, then?

EVANS: Yes, but——[*pauses.*]

ARTHUR: But?

EVANS: [*With a burst of courage*] But upon no consideration will I have her if I must feel that she marries me because you wish it, and not of her own free will.

ARTHUR: You are a fool. [*in a kindlier voice*] You are suited to each other. That is why you should marry. Never mind the rest. When a man marries, doctor, he realizes himself for the first time—especially a man like you. You are not the strong sort; you can't get on alone. Just what *is* the difficulty in your mind? Temperamentally the girl and you suit each other. Moreover, she is intelligent and loyal——

EVANS: Yes.

ARTHUR: But you demand that she be delirious with love of you. Rot! She likes you. She will work with you. Nothing else matters. [*approaches Evans*] Courage, doctor. You want the girl. Don't be too particular about the quality of her affections. For if she doesn't love you the worst that can happen is that some day—I don't believe it; she is too sensible—but let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that she will take a fancy to someone else. [*Evans shudders*] Well, well, it's possible you know. But why should that make you afraid? If it happens, pay no attention to it. [*shakes Evans good-naturedly*] Come, man, don't put such a serious face on it. It hasn't happened yet, you know. [*releases him*] Seriously, it wouldn't be such a tragedy. Take me, for instance. You know of my . . . escapades—Lord knows you chatter about them enough around here. Well, they haven't made my wife any the less happy. No, doctor, infidelity of that sort will not spoil your marriage. [*turns away.*]

EVANS: Isn't it time to get things ready for the operation?

ARTHUR: Yes.

EVANS: [*goes to the door; then returns*] I do not wish you to think me ungrateful, master.

ARTHUR: Don't worry about that.

EVANS: I am greatly in your debt. I don't wish to appear ungrateful.

ARTHUR: One thing more. If you should marry, I prefer to continue calling her Miss Ida. I am used to that name; and it would be awkward for me to begin calling her Mrs. Ida or Mrs. Evans. You have no objection to that?

EVANS: [*smiles*] No, master.

ARTHUR: Thank you. Now get busy. [*Evans exits at left*] Well, little doctor, there was something more for your notebook.

ROKORO: [*closes the book; comes down, grinning*] Most interesting! Brave man, brave!

ARTHUR: He came to me penniless, but with a Johns Hopkins degree. It *was* brave of him to cast his fortunes with a quack.

ROKORO: [*rubs his hands*] Ho, ho, ho!

ARTHUR: Now that fellow will make something of himself in time. He's an awful ass now, you see, but I'll put some sense in his head.

ROKORO: [*protests*] Oh, no!

ARTHUR: Don't you think it is possible?

ROKORO: Yes, yes, too possible. But it would not be good. Better to remain as he is. He is quite right.

ARTHUR: How do you mean he is right?

ROKORO: If, as he believes, the lady does not love him——

ARTHUR: And that is fatal, from your Oriental point of view——

ROKORO: [*grins broadly*] From my primitive point of view.

ARTHUR: Precisely. You can't be expected to see it in the right light.

ROKORO: No, no. You make a mistake, master. The people of the West and the people of the East . . . just the same . . . under their skins. Every kind of people have emotions . . . must have emotions. You try to substitute reason . . . What you call it? . . . *Utility!* But it does not go . . . It is false, false.

ARTHUR: What can you Orientals know of reason, utility? You are dreamers. We? We have rubbed the sleep out of our eyes and are awake.

ROKORO: You try to change yourself . . . to be something else . . . with your reason [*shakes himself, grinning*] New people! . . . But it does not work . . . never . . . cannot be done.

ARTHUR: So that is what you have decided, you little spy. You nose around here, observing everything, taking notes of everything; but secretly I believe that you are laughing at us all the time.

ROKORO: [*quickly*] But, no . . . I do not laugh.

ARTHUR: Don't lie!

ROKORO: It is true, master.

ARTHUR: Your Government sent you here to study. Why don't you?

ROKORO: But I do learn.

ARTHUR: Not a thing. You are only having a good time.

ROKORO: Indeed, master, I learn . . . I marvel . . . days at a time.

ARTHUR: [*mocking him*] Days at a time! What, for instance? What do you marvel at? Quickly!

ROKORO: [*at a loss for the moment*] Er—the politicians. How many there are . . . for instance. [*Arthur laughs*] And also . . . also——

ARTHUR: Also? Can't think of anything else?

ROKORO: You always confuse me. But it is not to be denied that there are a great many things to learn here. Inventions . . . discoveries . . . science . . . marvellous! But——[*pulls his ear thoughtfully.*]

ARTHUR: Well, out with it.

ROKORO: You people of the West have discovered everything except . . . except how to be happy.

ARTHUR: [*ironically*] And you?

ROKORO: [*very earnestly*] We discovered it long ago . . . very long ago . . . while you were worrying about your Utility . . . your false Utility.

ARTHUR: No, little doctor, we have ceased to strive for what *you* call happiness. That is where we are in advance of you. Our discoveries! Pah! They are nothing—yet. But we have succeeded in making ourselves more than mere functions, impulses, emotions or whatever you choose to call it. Look around you, little spy, and see. Most of us are not so badly off because of this utility of ours, are we?

ROKORO: Who can say? You think you live wisely. . . . I think you are only practical instead of wise. Take yourself, for instance . . . your marriage.

ARTHUR: *My* marriage?

ROKORO: [*abashed*] Not so! . . . I am stupid. . . . I did no mean that. [*solicitously*] Are you angry?

ARTHUR: Of course not. What were you going to say?

ROKORO: You tell Dr. Evans he should marry Miss Ida because . . . because they *fit* each other . . . just like to say this wheel fits with this wheel, and so

the thing must go. [*illustrates with his fingers*] But marriage is not a clock where the wheels must turn . . . No . . . people are not wheels . . . You cannot anticipate how they will turn . . . They themselves do not know how they will turn. [*wipes his brow*] Difficult in English.

ARTHUR: You started to say something about my marriage.

ROKORO: [*evading the question*] Suppose Miss Ida marries with Dr. Evans because her reason says it will be convenient . . . and suppose if some day her heart should choose another man.

ARTHUR: That may happen.

ROKORO: But it would be terrible. For then he would have to kill her.

ARTHUR: Nothing so tragic as that. Reasonable men do not kill on such trifling provocation.

ROKORO: You call it trifling . . . if a wife gives herself to another.

ARTHUR: It's annoying, I suppose, but then it's human nature. And a wife can be unfaithful and still be a good wife.

ROKORO: [*shakes his head wonderingly*] So? Not kill her? Adore her?

ARTHUR: Not so much *adore* as be *tolerant.*

ROKORO: Most interesting!

ARTHUR: Don't forget to make a note of that.

ROKORO: Ho, ho, ho!

[*Katherine enters at left.*]

ARTHUR: [*to Katherine*] Everything ready?

KATHERINE: Not quite. Miss Ida will call you. [*Rokoro shakes hands with her*] Good morning, Doctor Rokoro. [*to Arthur*] Is that model finished?

ARTHUR: Yes. [*goes to the table.*]

KATHERINE: [*to Rokoro*] Have you two been wrangling again?

ROKORO: [*rubs his hands, grinning*] Most interesting!

ARTHUR: [*comes between them, carrying an orthopedic model*] Out of the way, seducer!

ROKORO: [*steps back, laughing*] Ho, ho!

ARTHUR: He has entirely lost his sense of shame. [*shows Katherine the model.*]

ROKORO: Don't believe him. . . . Not a word!

ARTHUR: Is it all right?

KATHERINE: [*considering the model*] I suppose so.

ARTHUR: [*Indicates something on the model*] Here; isn't that what you meant?

KATHERINE: Exactly, thank you.

ARTHUR: The thanks are due to you. I wonder how you came to think of it. [*touches her chin; she draws back*] Why, I haven't kissed you this morning.

[*He kisses her cheek. She receives his kiss with closed eyes and compressed lips. He releases her and turns to Rokoro with the model.*]

See this, little doctor; it would never have occurred to me. But Katherine thinks my thoughts better than I do. You consider that before you speak against my marriage again. [*Katherine looks sharply at Rokoro.*]

ROKORO: [*earnestly*] Do not believe him . . . Lies! . . . Awful!

ARTHUR: Why, he has reasoned it out that our marriage is altogether wrong.

KATHERINE: [*quietly, intensely; to Rokoro*] What do you know . . . about that?

ROKORO: No, no . . . believe me . . . we spoke abstractly . . . not about—— [*turns appealingly to Arthur*] You must tell her, master . . She will think ——

ARTHUR: What a tragic face you put on it, dear! We were only joking, of course.

KATHERINE: [*bitterly*] Of course.

ARTHUR: You two are very much alike,—you take yourselves so seriously.

ROKORO: No . . . but one must be serious about some things.

KATHERINE: [*with quiet irony*] Not the master.

ARTHUR: No, not I.

KATHERINE: But we can't all be like you. We are only small people,—small and ludicrous.

ARTHUR: Offended?

KATHERINE: No, I've had seven years within which to get used to it.

ARTHUR: Don't blame me for being as I am. The fact is that my brother, who is soon to honor us with his presence, took all the seriousness in our family. He took so much there was none left for me. But ever since he has been serious enough for both of us.

ROKORO: Poor lady! It is impossible to talk with him. [*Ida enters at left.*]

IDA: Everything is ready.

KATHERINE: Very well. [*She exits at left.*]

ARTHUR: [*throws away his cigarette*] All right. [*stretches himself.*]

ROKORO: Do you want me to help you today?

ARTHUR: I always want you. You are a poor philosopher, but as a surgeon there is hope for you.

[They exit together at left. Ida begins to work, stops to reflect, begins again, then springs up and goes to the window, which she opens. For a short time she stands there, looking out. Clemens enters from left, removes the coffee things.]

IDA: Is Mrs. Wessley in the operating room?

CLEMENS: Yes, Miss Ida.

IDA: Dr. Evans, too?

CLEMENS: No. The master won't have him there.

IDA: When the people from the city come show them in here. [*Evans enters from left, carrying a ledger which he places on the little table*] Have you told the cook to prepare for five extra at luncheon?

CLEMENS: Four, Miss Ida.

IDA: No, five. Mr. Thompson is sure to come, too.

CLEMENS: Yes, yes. I will tell the cook. [*exits at left with the coffee things.*]

EVANS: I have brought you the journal, Miss Ida.

IDA: [*at the window*] Very well.

EVANS: Have you a moment to spare for me now?

IDA: Why aren't you in the operating room?

EVANS: The master told me to bring the journal in here.

IDA: Why do you let him treat you like a servant?

EVANS: He says I make him nervous with my anxious haste. I can't seem to get used to operations.

IDA: Next thing you know you will be sweeping floors and serving tea.

EVANS: That's unkind, Miss Ida. You know the master wants me for the theoretical work.

IDA: That's what he tells you. It amuses him to dominate you and bewilder you, to make you believe that nothing is anything—but that *he* is everything.

EVANS: [*aghast*] Do you really think that of him? Do you mean it?

IDA: [*passionately*] He handles us as he handles his instruments—you, me, his wife, everyone. *He* knows best what we are; *he* knows best what we can do; *he* knows best how we should act. And *we* believe and obey him. [*bitterly*] And now it suits him for us to

marry, and at once you obediently fall in love with me. [*comes impatiently down to the little table.*]

EVANS: No, Miss Ida, you shouldn't say that. If I only . . . I am so clumsy and inexperienced in such things . . . I get confused. Please believe me, Miss Ida, the very first moment I saw you . . . I . . . I loved you. Only I would never have dared to speak . . . If *he* hadn't suggested it.

IDA: [*looks at him searchingly*] I can scarcely believe it. But, no,—I can believe you.

EVANS: Please believe me, Miss Ida.

IDA: [*covers her face with her hands; then raises her head again*] That will make it easier for me. [*nervously*] Only time! He must give me a little time. He doesn't know how hard he is on us. [*more calmly*] Perhaps I will. Just give me a little time to consider.

EVANS: [*gently*] I had not dreamed of hurrying you, Miss Ida. [*after a pause*] May I ask you something?

IDA: [*hesitates; looks at him a bit furtively*] Yes.

EVANS: I have often wondered . . . when I saw you with the master, or sometimes when we talked about him ——. I really don't know what to think. Sometimes you won't let anyone say a word against him; and then again sometimes I wonder whether you don't actually hate him.

IDA: Is that what you wanted to ask me?

EVANS: Yes.

IDA: Perhaps I do hate him. Because I know him. I think I am the only one who does know him. When he is not intimidating us he is laughing at us. And when the master laughs it makes him strong. That sounds strange, doesn't it? But oh, how strong the master's laughter makes him! And he laughs at everything.

That is why nobody can be very much to him. He can't love anything very much—except himself. [*looks Evans squarely in the eyes*] And now you may ask me the question you *really* wanted to ask.

EVANS: [*quietly*] I have nothing more to ask.

IDA: [*relieved*] That was all?

EVANS: Yes, Miss Ida. I used to wonder if it were possible that a woman who had been close to him could ever care for another man.

IDA: [*with an ironical little laugh*] He takes care of that.

EVANS: [*after a pause*] I shall be patient, Miss Ida.

IDA: There is but one thing I demand. You must trust me. You must have faith that I am devoted to you no matter what happens—or has happened—otherwise

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EVANS: I do trust you, Miss Ida.

IDA: Then—perhaps

[*Sighs deeply; buries her face in her hands. Evans goes slowly to the window and looks out. Ida composes herself, raises her head, looks around at Evans, then begins to typewrite. For a short time only the clicking of the machine is heard. Clemens enters at left, showing in Dr. Klauder, a little, old man with a ruddy, good-natured countenance and smooth, white hair.*]

CLEMENS: The people from the city. [*Klauder bows to Ida and Evans.*]

IDA: [*rises*] Good morning, Dr. Klauder.

[*Juliet and Raymond enter. She is about forty; richly but not fashionably dressed; her face is frigid and her manner hostile. She looks about the room curiously and scrutinizes Ida sharply. Raymond is*

about forty-three. His eyes are restless and evasive; his voice slow and precise.]

EVANS: [*to Klauder*] I am Dr. Evans, assistant to Professor Wessley.

[*Peter Brookson enters. He is about fifty; stout, jovial; wears a frock coat that fits him badly; carries a high silk hat in his hand. Ida whispers to Clemens, who exits left.*]

JULIET: [*to Ida*] Is this the *professor's* study? [*she puts a sarcastic intonation on the word.*]

IDA: Yes, Mrs. Wessley, study and office.

EVANS: [*to Raymond and Brookson*] I am Dr. Evans. [*Raymond bows coldly.*]

BROOKSON: [*shakes hands heartily*] Glad to know ye, doctor.

JULIET: [*to Ida*] And do you stay in this room all the time?

IDA: I am his secretary.

RAYMOND: [*to Evans*] So you are the young man who attached himself to my brother despite the repudiation of him by every medical school?

EVANS: I am, sir.

KLAUDER: Isn't it best to forget the old difficulties now?

JULIET: [*to Ida*] And doesn't he mind having you around all the time?

IDA: He hasn't mentioned it.

EVANS: I shall see that Mrs. Wessley is notified you are here.

JULIET: [*nudging Raymond*] Do you hear that, Raymond?

EVANS: Will you excuse me? [*exits at left.*]

JULIET: Your brother has a female secretary. Isn't it original?

BROOKSON: [*admiring the room*] He certainly has fixed up this old place fine.

RAYMOND: [*to Klauder*] We shall have a trying half hour, as you will see. My brother will not spare our feelings.

KLAUDER: [*sighs*] We must try to put it as gracefully as possible.

JULIET: Yes, Raymond, you must adapt yourself to circumstances.

BROOKSON: I'm mighty glad it turned out this way. He is a great surgeon, gentlemen, even if his methods ain't the same as yours, and he has made our little city famous from one end of the country to another. It's funny, but when a stranger comes to town these days, he says, "Oh, this is the town where Wessley's hospital is." Why, damme, gentlemen, that is the only thing our city's noted for!

RAYMOND: Of course, it is a great joy to me that my brother has won authoritative recognition at last. But I know he will not forgive me for the opposition I was officially forced to show him.

KLAUDER: Well, well, we must be tactful. [*Katherine enters at left, dressed in a pretty morning gown. The men rise.*]

JULIET: [*crosses to Katherine*] I am happy to meet you at last, my dear sister-in-law. I have always wanted to know you.

KATHERINE: Nice of you to say so. Pray, gentlemen, keep your seats.

KLAUDER: Thank you. [*Katherine sits on the sofa. The men resume their places.*]

KATHERINE: Miss Ida, will you be good enough to see that Professor Wessley comes here as soon as the operation is over?

JULIET: She appears to be a very useful person.

KATHERINE: Very. [*turns to Klauder*] You have no idea, Dr. Klauder——

JULIET: [*interrupts*] Do you know, I have always admired you greatly for your——

KATHERINE: Won't you sit down? [*indicates a chair opposite the smaller table.*]

JULIET: [*sits*] As I was saying, we have heard what an active interest you take in your husband's work. They say you are a veritable good fairy to the sick.

KATHERINE: I deserve no praise for it, Mrs. Wessley. If I help my husband it is because his work interests me.

KLAUDER: Then I suppose your husband's latest triumph pleases you as much as him.

KATHERINE: I find it a bit droll. It's like a page from Molière. In the end the King sends his messenger, and everything is satisfactory.

KLAUDER: [*laughs*] You are French, Mrs. Wessley?

KATHERINE: My father was French, but my mother was Irish.

KLAUDER: Indeed?

KATHERINE: And I was born and educated in France.

RAYMOND: How interesting!

KATHERINE: I am especially glad to know you, Dr. Klauder, because I am indebted to you for many pleasant hours.

KLAUDER: To me?

KATHERINE: Last Winter Arthur and I read your delicious book together, your "Analysis of Nietzsche." I don't remember ever having read anything that pleased me more.

JULIET: May I look around a bit? Philosophy is too complicated a subject for a plain woman like me. [*crosses to the big table and examines bric-a-brac.*]

KLAUDER: Then I take it you disagree with Nietzsche yourself.

KATHERINE: For the most part. But Arthur is a warm disciple of his.

RAYMOND: I didn't know Arthur had studied philosophy. He ran away from school before he had time to learn much.

KATHERINE: He learned a great many things without going to schools for them. [*Brookson sniggers.*]

JULIET: [*passes to the photograph of Katherine on the mantel*] Just look, Raymond, what a darling photograph. [*Raymond crosses to her and looks at photograph*] It's just too sweet for anything. So girlish and innocent! Just look, Dr. Klauder. [*she crosses to Klauder.*]

KLAUDER: [*looking at it*] It is indeed.

KATHERINE: It was taken a long time ago.

KLAUDER: How old were you then?

KATHERINE: Barely sixteen. It was about the time I first met Arthur.

JULIET: [*replacing the photograph on the mantel*] You were very pretty—then. [*Thompson enters at left. He is about twenty-eight, tall and handsome.*]

THOMPSON: I read of your good fortune in the newspapers, and hurried over at once.

KATHERINE: [*nods familiarly; introduces*] Let me present our neighbor, Mr. Thompson . . . Dr. Klauder. [*Thompson comes forward to shake hands*] Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Wessley, Arthur's brother, you know.

THOMPSON: [*smiles in spite of himself and bows*] Charmed, I'm sure. [*Juliet nods stiffly.*]

KATHERINE: [*introduces*] His honor, the Mayor.

BROOKSON: [*rises heavily*] Well, we've met before. Don't you remember, Thompson?

THOMPSON: Yes. You wanted me to be a candidate for alderman.

KATHERINE: Fancy you in politics.

THOMPSON: Yes, isn't it funny?

BROOKSON: It was a reform party, you know.

THOMPSON: Well, I've never owned political ambitions. And what is more, I never cared the least bit about my fellow citizens. My only wish is that they cared as little about me.

RAYMOND: Not very altruistic, Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON: That's not as selfish as it sounds. The fact is I have my own affairs to worry about and haven't time to think of other people's troubles.

KATHERINE: [*ironically*] The poor boy has so many cares!

KLAUDER: We were just talking about—— [*breaks off as he sees Arthur enter at left*] But here is—— [*Raymond and Brookson rise.*]

ARTHUR: [*comes in quickly*] Dr. Klauder, Mr. Mayor. Oh, Mr. Thompson, this is very good of you. Do keep your seats, gentlemen.

[*Brookson sits. Arthur crosses to the fireplace. Rokoro, who has entered behind Arthur, remains standing in the doorway.*]

ARTHUR: [*sees his brother*] Well! And you, too! This is very noble of you.

RAYMOND: [*cordially*] My dear Arthur, I wanted to be first——

ARTHUR: [*interrupts; summons Rokoro*] Little Doctor! [*introduces*] Gentlemen, this is Dr. Rokoro of Japan. His government sent him here to investigate the medical sciences. He is now my chief assistant.

Remarkable fellow, gentlemen! Has every conceivable kind of degree, yet he knows a thing or two. And this, Little Doctor, is my brother. See what tricks Nature does play. And this would be my sister-in-law. [*nods at Juliet critically*] Yes; I knew you would look like that.

RAYMOND: [*with suppressed anger*] You are just the same as ever.

ARTHUR: Just the same. It never did suit you, did it? You must pardon me, gentlemen, for having kept you waiting; but the operation took longer than we had anticipated, and afterwards I had to have a look at Titus. [*to Raymond*] Titus is my dog, you know. I introduced myself to him by my new title—professor! And what do you suppose? The beast wasn't a bit impressed. [*slaps Brookson on the back*] Well, Mr. Mayor, times have changed, eh? Do you remember the day you threatened to send the police to clean this place out?

BROOKSON: I was under pressure at the time, my dear Professor.

ARTHUR: So?

BROOKSON: You don't suppose I cared *personally* whether I had a degree or not to run a hospital with. No, *sir!* I said to my wife at the time, I says, "Maria," says I, "there's something to that fellow. He's going to show us all some day." And, damme, if you haven't gone and done it, too.

KLAUDER: Hum! My worthy professor, may I——

ARTHUR: [*turns to him*] You and I, Doctor, have too keen a sense of humor to be angry with each other.

KLAUDER: You are very gracious, but then you can afford to be. Yours was not the first genius to be misunderstood.

RAYMOND: I am sorry, Arthur, that you are still bitter against me, but you should try to understand how unfortunately I was situated.

JULIET: There was his public office—— [*rises.*]

RAYMOND: And you came determined to defy authority and practice without a license.

JULIET: That made it very awkward for us, my dear brother-in-law. Consider in what a light it put us.

ARTHUR: Won't you sit down, dear sister-in-law.

RAYMOND: To arrive here suddenly, rent this old building, take in sick people——

ARTHUR: And cure them.

RAYMOND: All this without a certificate, without even a doctor's degree—really, if you consider it dispassionately, you must concede that it was unlawful, and that I was forced to take official action. Then, too, remember there was no way for the College or the State Board to get any proof of your fitness. And you could scarcely expect us to believe on your mere word, in the virtue of this new treatment of yours or in your miraculous skill in applying it.

ARTHUR: No.

RAYMOND: Painful though it was, I treated you with the same impartiality I would have shown an utter stranger. That was my duty. My conscience is clear.

JULIET: So it is.

ARTHUR: [*musingly*] You always could manage to keep your conscience clear.

BROOKSON: Damme, we all make mistakes. What's the use of diggin' up old graves?

KATHERINE: No, Mr. Mayor, I believe it is better to talk such things over; otherwise they are never forgotten.

ARTHUR: [*puts his hand on her shoulder affectionately*] That's a primitive virtue, my dear—to bury the hatchet. [*Thompson rises, perceptibly annoyed, and crosses to the window. Katherine disengages herself lightly.*]

RAYMOND: I am deeply grieved that it has been so unpleasant for you.

BROOKSON: And now we're doin' our best to square it.

RAYMOND: To be sure, it is exasperating to be misunderstood.

ARTHUR: [*laughing*] No, my brother, I wasn't exasperated, I was amused. You prosecuted me for practicing without a degree. I proved that my assistants were physicians of standing, and thereafter called myself master instead of doctor. You denounced me as a quack and a menace to public health; but the patients kept coming and I kept curing them. Why should I have been exasperated? It was funny. The pettiness of small minds is always funny.

RAYMOND: Well, I had hoped that you had buried the old enmities and forgotten all that——

ARTHUR: All that you did to me.

RAYMOND: You live your way, I live mine—but, after all, we are brothers.

ARTHUR: And the politicians desire it.

RAYMOND: There is no use trying to reason with you. If you hate me so much——

ARTHUR: But, my dear brother [*comes slowly up stage*] do you suppose I *hate* you? Far from it. You are only my bad brother. Life wouldn't have been complete without you. It was you who caused me to run away from home, and so it is partially due to you that I have made myself what I am. You and father! You with your envy and malice; and father with his insane

desire to break my will. All that I know of philosophy I learned of you two. But there! We will not discuss the old things any more, if they displease you. There! [*offers his hand.*]

RAYMOND: There is nothing to be gained by keeping up old feuds.

ARTHUR: [*with an appraising glance at Juliet*] You are really an unlucky devil, after all. [*goes behind Katherine.*]

KLAUDER: Professor, I am sure we would all like to look around the hospital that we have slandered so grievously without ever having seen it. Will you show us through?

ARTHUR: With pleasure.

JULIET: [*whispers to Raymond*] It's shameful the way you let him talk to you.

KATHERINE: Will you go, too, Mr. Mayor? [*Brookson rises and joins the group around the sofa.*]

RAYMOND: What could I do? It is his house, and everyone is on his side now.

JULIET: And that stuck-up French wife of his——

RAYMOND: Hush! They may hear you.

[*He joins Rokoro. Thompson has been standing by the larger table, watching Katherine anxiously. Juliet joins him. They talk in pantomime.*]

ARTHUR: All this, my dear, can happen because a millionaire's son has a game leg. This way. [*Klauder and Brookson exit at left*] Are you coming, brother?

RAYMOND: [*to Rokoro, as they are coming up left*] He hasn't changed a particle. A man is lucky who can take life as lightly as he.

ROKORO: Who knows? Perhaps the tragic natures are really the happiest. [*grins and rubs his hands as he exits left with Raymond.*]

JULIET: [*to Thompson*] Aren't you coming?

THOMPSON: I've seen the place so often, you know.

ARTHUR: Sweetest of sisters-in-law!

JULIET: [*joining him; sweetly*] I was just talking to your neighbor, Mr. Thompson. He comes to see you often, doesn't he?

ARTHUR: [*leading her off*] Every day, dear sister-in-law, every day.

JULIET: [*looking back at Thompson, who has joined Katherine at the sofa*] That must have been a great consolation to you in those lonely days, before you were recognized, [*Katherine and Thompson listen*] especially to your dear wife.

ARTHUR: [*coolly ironic*] Indeed, dear sister-in-law, I don't know what she would have done without him. [*exits at left, after her.*]

[*Katherine stares after them, her hands clenched resentfully. Presently she turns to Thompson, her face hard and defiant.*]

KATHERINE: Jean, do you still want me?

THOMPSON: [*reproachfully; half sullenly*] You know I do.

KATHERINE: I am going to do what you asked me.

THOMPSON: [*doubtfully*] When?

KATHERINE: Today—this afternoon.

THOMPSON: [*eagerly*] You will really come this afternoon! Oh, Katherine! [*bends over her hand and kisses it tenderly.*]

KATHERINE: [*draws her hand away; rises quickly*] Come let's join the others. We musn't stay here alone.

Curtain

ACT II

The scene is the same as that of the preceding act. The time is toward evening of the same day.

When the curtain rises Arthur is on the couch asleep. Rapping is heard at the door off left. As he does not stir, the rapping grows louder and more insistent. He awakes with a start.

ARTHUR: Yes! [*not quite awake*] Oh! Come in. Is it time——? [*looks at the clock*] Oh! [*sits up and stretches himself.*]

[*Clemens enters from left, with coffee.*]

CLEMENS: You slept soundly, master, I've been rapping for ten minutes.

ARTHUR: [*yawns*] I needed that nap. [*lights a cigarette*] My wife returned from the city yet?

CLEMENS: Not yet. Didn't you hear the noise, master?

ARTHUR: What noise?

CLEMENS: There's been a lot of excitement around here.

ARTHUR: What about?

CLEMENS: There has been a fire at the villa.

ARTHUR: Thompson's house? You don't say!

CLEMENS: Yes, sir. They telephoned for our fire extinguishing apparatus. There was an awful excitement.

ARTHUR: Wasn't the alarm turned in for the city fire department?

CLEMENS: Yes, sir; but our people got there first.

ARTHUR: Much damage?

CLEMENS: We don't know, master, they haven't come back yet. We could see the flames from here.

ARTHUR: Why didn't you wake me?

CLEMENS: Somebody turned on our fire-alarm. The lady in No. 13 took a convulsion and all the sick people were frightened. But Dr. Rokoro and Miss Ida quieted them alright.

ARTHUR: I hope there isn't much damage. It would be a pity if that dainty little house burned down. Telephone to Thompson and find out.

CLEMENS: I'll try it, master, but I think the wires are down.

[*He goes to the door at left, waits until Ida has entered, then exits. Ida carries a chart.*]

ARTHUR: Clemens has just been telling me how bravely you behaved, but you should have awakened me.

IDA: It really wasn't necessary. Dr. Rokoro came up at once and calmed all the patients. He told them those funny little stories of his, and in a few minutes had them all laughing. Why, some of them came up to the tower with us. We could see the fire plainly from there. Here is the chart.

ARTHUR: [*bends over it, makes a notation*] Perfect, Ida. Why, I believe you could run the whole hospital yourself.

IDA: Scarcely the operations.

ARTHUR: Who knows? Before long you may take that off my hands, too.

IDA: I am not a bit ambitious to try cutting up people.

ARTHUR: Aren't you a bit proud? All this great work of curing and alleviating the sufferings of so many unfortunate people to be held in your own little hands. And had you gone your own way you would still be playing silly exercises on a piano; no use to yourself or

anyone else. Wasn't I right? Be honest. [*she is silent*] Wasn't I?

IDA: [*reluctantly*] What good is all this to me? It doesn't make me happy. You took from me all the faith I ever had in myself——

ARTHUR: [*at the sofa, drinking coffee, unconcernedly*] Ah!

IDA: And all my hopes.

ARTHUR: [*sipping*] They were false hopes. You had no real talent.

IDA: [*sadly*] No, for if I had you couldn't have taken it from me. No doubt you were right about me, and about Dr. Evans, too.

ARTHUR: What of him?

IDA: He, too, may be deluding himself. But you shouldn't press him too hard. Some people can't live without their illusions. As for me—I'm not complaining.

ARTHUR: You are sulky, which is worse.

IDA: You might allow me *that* privilege.

ARTHUR: But you know I don't like it. I can't bear sulky people around me. Moreover, you have no cause to be sulky. I don't know what is ailing you. You used to be different altogether.

IDA: Many things used to be different.

ARTHUR: [*goes to the window, crossly*] Oh! If you are going to begin about *that!*

IDA: I am not beginning about that.

ARTHUR: I would have thought that you could be more reasonable.

IDA: [*reproachfully*] We can't all take things so lightly as you.

ARTHUR: You are a child, and I took you for a woman. Have I deceived you? What did I promise

you? You knew me. You had been in my house two years. Lord! If I wasn't constant to my *wife*—to whom I am attached through our work, and through, well, through a totally different feeling—how could you have expected me to be constant to you. I am not constant. Make up your mind to that. Nor am I affectionate. I haven't the time to be. And if you are going to be sullen and reproachful and tearful about it, please do it when I am not around. [*stalks angrily across the room.*]

IDA: [*frightened by his outburst*] I have tried not to look reproachful.

ARTHUR: Well, you haven't succeeded. [*after a pause, more kindly*] Really, Ida, there is no sense in this sort of thing. You are pitying yourself for nothing.

IDA: I don't blame you; you can't be different. But it is hard to think that I—— [*stops; starts again*] It was all so beautiful and so sacred to me, and now, suddenly, it is blown out like a candle, and nothing is left —nothing! [*weeps.*]

ARTHUR: But, child, emotions are always fleeting like that.

IDA: Yes, I know.

ARTHUR: But you expected yours to last for eternity.

IDA: You don't understand at all what I mean.

ARTHUR: You women are all alike.

IDA: I did not promise myself any more. I knew from the beginning that after a few weeks you would tire of it and [*bitterly*] throw me aside. But I closed my eyes to that. I wanted to be happy, happy for once in my life, and afterwards to have the memories; and always to live on those blissful memories. That is what I dreamed.

ARTHUR: Well, why don't you do it?

IDA: You have spoiled that, too.

ARTHUR: You are absurd.

IDA: The way you treat me now, the way you look at me, the way you talk about marrying me off! You don't seem to remember that I ever was anything to you.

ARTHUR: What is the use of remembering such things?

IDA: [*without heeding him*] And it seems to me that it was *never* any more than a trifle to you. When I think how absurd I must have appeared to you with my soulful love I am so sorry and ashamed I could kill myself. [*pauses*] It makes me feel so desolate. All that I had, all that I was, you seem to have taken away from me.

ARTHUR: Child, life is like that.

IDA: [*resentfully*] No, only you are like that.

ARTHUR: [*lightly*] You have no heart; that's what my father used to tell me. But he had none himself. Everybody demands of everyone else that he have a heart.

IDA: [*fiercely*] You needn't mock at my feelings! You will not convince me that it was merely a joke to me, too. [*recollects herself*] I beg your pardon. I shan't speak of it again. Only, please, don't make fun of me. If *you* can take everything for granted, and see the ironical side of it, it is because you are stronger than we are.

ARTHUR: I see the ironical side because I have learned that the other, the emotional side, is half imagination and half self-pity. If I have emotions I master them. Whoever is wise will do as I do; the others I cannot help.

IDA: It is very well for you to say that. Sometimes I fancy that you don't belong in this world at all. It is

as though you were cast down among us from another planet. You seem to *see* all we do, and it amuses you, but you never really understand. You never see beneath the surface of us.. You perceive only the outward signs we make. That is why we appear comical to you.

[*Evans enters at left with the journal.*]

EVANS: Dr. Rokoro asks if you will come in and look at the patient in twelve. The dressing must have shifted.

ARTHUR: So! Has my wife come back yet?

IDA: She left word that she would return at six.

EVANS: No, master.

ARTHUR: I'll go and have a look at that dressing. You wait here. We will take up the journal directly. [*exit left.*]

[*Evans crosses to the larger table, puts down the journal.*]

IDA: [*after a pause*] Dr. Evans.

EVANS: Yes, Miss Ida.

IDA: I have made up my mind. [*bows her head.*]

EVANS: [*looks up joyfully*] Oh!

[*His demeanor changes as he perceives her lack of enthusiasm. He glances at the door through which Arthur has just gone out, then softly*]

You have made up your mind of your own free will?

IDA: My own free will.

EVANS: [*greatly moved*] I thank you . . . I can't say any more now . . . but I shall endeavor to make you happy.

IDA: [*with constraint*] I would like you to believe that I am sincere about this.

EVANS: Yes, I do, Miss Ida.

IDA: Sincere and honest and whole-hearted as one person can be to another.

EVANS: [*comes slowly down*] Miss Ida . . . may I kiss you?

IDA: First—— [*hesitates*] I have something to tell you.

EVANS: No, no; I beg of you. [*very gently*] I *know.*

IDA: [*bows her head. After a pause, half turned from him*] And it makes no difference.

EVANS: No; that must be forgotten.

IDA: [*looks at him searchingly, then bows her head and draws a deep breath*] Both we failures will begin life over again.

EVANS: Yes, Ida, that is my sincerest wish. I will try to make you happy, Ida. I believe we can be happy together . . . only . . . there is one thing . . . you won't be angry if I mention it? We are going to be honest with each other, are we not?

IDA: I will not be angry.

EVANS: I have thought it is only out of pity for me that you will have me. Is it, Miss Ida? I couldn't bear that.

IDA: No; not out of pity. Perhaps—perhaps, I need pity more than you.

EVANS: Then it is out of despair, Miss Ida? Are you doing it because you are desperate?

IDA: [*shakes her head*] No; I was before, but not now. Perhaps one must have courage to do things out of despair. I bow my head, and——

EVANS: [*tenderly*] Then everything is well.

IDA: [*looks at him steadily; slowly*] No; there is something more.

EVANS: [*walking away*] Sometimes . . . it is also the fear [*gently*] of him, of your memories of *him.* What can I be to you after *him?* If only you wouldn't compare me with him in your mind.

IDA: When I compare you with him I shall realize all that you can be to me, and how little he could have been. Perhaps your steadfast, unselfish devotion is worth more than anything he has to give. I am not asking much of you, Dr. Evans—just a small measure of happiness in a quiet way. . . . Will you shake hands? [*Offers her hand.*]

[*Evans starts toward her, but is interrupted by the entrance of Clemens and Thompson from left.*]

CLEMENS: Will you wait here, sir? I'll tell the master at once.

THOMPSON: [*laboring under great, but restrained, excitement*] At once, please. It is very important.

CLEMENS: I'll do my best, sir, but the master is in the surgical ward, and I am not permitted to go in there.

EVANS: Perhaps I can——

THOMPSON: [*sees Ida and Evans for the first time. Nods*] I would be very much obliged.

EVANS: [*going up left*] I'll go at once.

THOMPSON: Just a moment. [*looks cautiously at Clemens.*]

EVANS: [*Approaches Thompson*] Yes.

THOMPSON: [*softly*] It is most important that I talk to him before—eh—he sees his wife.

EVANS: But Mrs. Wessley hasn't returned from the city yet.

THOMPSON: Yes, she is upstairs. She came with me. Now, if it is in any way possible——

EVANS: Of course, Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON: Thank you.

[*Evans and Clemens exit left. Ida is working at the smaller table. Thompson goes up right and stands pondering; then remembers Ida.*]

Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Wayne, I am very nervous and somewhat out of breath. Good afternoon.

IDA: Good afternoon, Mr. Thompson.

[*Thompson continues to pace up and down excitedly. There is a short pause before Arthur enters from left.*]

ARTHUR: What is it, Thompson, has anything happened?

THOMPSON: [*quickly*] No, of course not.

ARTHUR: Did they put the fire out?

THOMPSON: Yes; that is, the house was burned down.

ARTHUR: Completely? Oh! that's too bad. Well, I hope that——

THOMPSON: What do you mean? Oh! No one was hurt.

ARTHUR: What *is* the matter then? [*offers his hand.*]

THOMPSON: [*drawing his own hand back*] I would like to have a word with you.

ARTHUR: [*looks at him curiously*] Of course. [*waves to a seat.*]

THOMPSON: [*does not sit*] Alone.

ARTHUR: Oh! [*looks at him sharply*] Will you excuse us, Miss Ida? [*Ida is already on her way to the door. She exits left.*] Well?

THOMPSON: I told you that my house was burned down.

ARTHUR: Yes. [*looks at Thompson searchingly.*]

THOMPSON: I have a couple of rooms there, a sort of a den, on the top floor. The fire broke out on the ground floor. The entire lower part of the house was in flames before the fire was discovered. We—— [*Arthur starts*] we could only be saved by leaving through the windows. They look out into the garden, where a great crowd of

people had gathered to watch the fire. [*holds his breath.*]

ARTHUR: That is you were upstairs in your room when the fire broke out?

THOMPSON: [*nervously*] Yes, and with me——

ARTHUR: And you were not alone.

THOMPSON: No; that is why I am here now.

ARTHUR: [*quietly*] What do you mean?

THOMPSON: [*desperately*] A lady was up there with me—your wife.

ARTHUR: [*self-contained, after a pause*] How were you rescued?

THOMPSON: Down a ladder. There was really no danger.

ARTHUR: Into the garden?

THOMPSON: Yes.

ARTHUR: Where a great many people were standing?

THOMPSON: [*softly*] Yes.

ARTHUR: [*with bitter irony*] That was well done.

THOMPSON: [*after a pause*] But——

ARTHUR: [*with cold menace*] Of course, you give me your word——

THOMPSON: I accompanied Mrs. Wessley——

ARTHUR: Of course, you give me your word that there was nothing improper between you and my wife.

THOMPSON: [*reluctantly*] Yes.

ARTHUR: Of course. Still you are here at my disposal for whatever I may choose to do in the matter, knowing the affair has a very questionable look.

THOMPSON: That is why I am here. I did not wish you to hear it from anyone else, and——

ARTHUR: And you are willing to take all the consequences, and so forth?

THOMPSON: I deplore deeply that this unfortunate circumstance should give rise to any reflection upon the honor of a man who has always stood so high——

ARTHUR: Let that be my concern. But before we talk any further——

[*Goes to the door at left; locks it and pockets the key. Goes to the larger table, takes a revolver out of the drawer; goes down left; glares at Thompson, then points to the photograph of Katherine on the mantel.*] You know that pretty little photograph of my wife there on the mantel. Stay where you are, please.

[*Takes quick aim and shoots. The photograph drops to the floor. Arthur crosses to it, picks it up and offers it to Thompson.*] There! I don't mean that to be symbolic. I only wanted to show you that I know how to shoot. [*lays both revolver and photograph on the table*] But you did know that. We have often ridden and shot together. [*leans nonchalantly against the table*] Now, my dear Thompson, I will tell you what to do. Go home, and go to sleep. This affair must have excited you considerably.

THOMPSON: [*bursts out angrily*] You are treating me like a——

ARTHUR: [*savagely*] Yes! [*evenly*] Don't lose your head. Be discreet. Are you disappointed because I didn't shoot you? [*goes slowly up to Thompson, his voice hardens*] I have your word, haven't I? That is enough for me. [*coolly again*] And if that is enough for me, Thompson, you needn't be more particular.

CLEMENS: [*his terrified voice through the door up left*] Master! Master! Did you call? [*rattles the doorknob anxiously.*]

ARTHUR: [*after a pause*] No, Clemens, thank you.

[*Leisurely lights a cigarette.*]

I used to be very angry with my servants because they smoked my cigars. It wasn't the value of the cigars that mattered. It was the disquieting knowledge that I was being robbed, and someone was secretly chuckling about it—that is what hurt. But in time one learns how life is, and become resigned. Nowadays my servants have permission to help themselves to my cigars as often as they please. . . . And so they have no further need to steal from me. Neither shall you steal from me again. [*unlocks the door*] If you should chance to meet my wife as you go out, will you be good enough to tell her to look after that boy in seven. That is vastly more important.

[*Crosses to the cabinet. Thompson stands stiffly looking at him, bewildered, outraged, starts to speak, changes his mind, bows shortly, and goes to the door at left.*]

Be discreet, Thompson.

[*Thompson exits, slamming the door. Arthur stares after him thoughtfully; his face becomes anxious and drawn. He smokes with quick, heavy puffs. In sudden disgust he throws his cigarette away and goes to the table, sweeps the revolver and photograph into the drawer, then rings for the servant. Clemens enters at left.*]

ARTHUR: Open the window and light up.

[*Clemens opens the window and switches on the lights.*]

Are the people back from the fire?

CLEMENS: Yes, master.

ARTHUR: [*watches him narrowly*] How was it? What do they say?

CLEMENS: [*evasively*] I was in the garden.

[*Rokoro enters from left; regards Arthur solicitously. Arthur beckons to Rokoro, but does not speak until Clemens has taken the coffee things and gone off left.*]

ARTHUR: Well?

ROKORO: [*uneasily*] I only want——

ARTHUR: Has the scandal spread in the house so soon?

ROKORO: The watchman said something. . . . I cautioned him——

ARTHUR: Let them talk! But you! I did not think I misunderstood *you.*

ROKORO: [*laughs mirthlessly*] Me?

ARTHUR: [*sharply*] What are you laughing at?

ROKORO: Nothing, nothing. Only I thought——

ARTHUR: What?

ROKORO: You say people can talk. But I . . . a foreigner . . . who will soon go away, and whom you always laugh at . . . I must not judge you wrongly. Curious!

ARTHUR: It is true I do not want you to think: "This man, who boasts of his complete mastery over his life, doesn't know how to keep his own house in order."

ROKORO: [*sympathetically*] No. I do not think that at all.

ARTHUR: What then?

ROKORO: That this must be a severe test of your strength.

ARTHUR: [*after a pause*] What would you do?

ROKORO: [*gravely*] We are different. [*laughs*] Barbarians!

ARTHUR: [*nods*] Yes.

ROKORO: Not able to reason.

ARTHUR: Not able to reason—that is it. It is so easy to be reasonable about other people's affairs. I want to see whether I can't be reasonable about my own. I want to do what I would require anyone else to do.

ROKORO: [*incredulously*] Is that possible?

ARTHUR: Why *not?* Not long ago you talked about *my* infidelities. Do you remember? And you reproached me on the subject of my wife.

ROKORO: You were angry.

ARTHUR: Not at all. It seemed to me you didn't understand that my love for my infidelities and my feeling for my wife are separate and distinct things; that these two things can exist together is incredible to you.

ROKORO: Yes.

ARTHUR: But they do. [*impatiently*] And all men know it who do not lie to themselves.

ROKORO: [*emphatically*] Men of the West!

ARTHUR: I am not making rules for the world. I can say only what I know of my own experience: that I—speaking plainly—when I come from another woman, realize all the more forcibly how dear my wife is to me. Laugh, but men *are* like that. We are beasts, if you like.

ROKORO: Yes, but if you—— [*stops short.*]

ARTHUR: What?

ROKORO: No . . . I should not say that.

ARTHUR: Speak up.

ROKORO: [*bashfully*] Haven't you . . . with your wife——? [*stops short again.*]

ARTHUR: Haven't I what?

ROKORO: Do you live with her . . . only *spiritually?*

ARTHUR: No, little doctor, for the beast will not be denied.

ROKORO: [*crosses the room, shuddering with disgust*] Oh!

ARTHUR: Does it seem illogical?

ROKORO: I do not understand it at all.

ARTHUR: For your notebook, little busybody? Well, listen then. Between a man and wife who are well mated an attachment can grow that is too powerful to be destroyed by petty considerations of infidelity. I am not ashamed of my polygamous instincts; they are part of my humanity. A human being has the right to be human; all he needs is the courage, and in the end he is better off for it.

ROKORO: [*quickly*] Are you better off for it? [*frightened by his own boldness*] No, no . . . I should not have said that.

ARTHUR: [*slowly*] I am not as badly off as you suppose. For I cannot be less than fair. What I permit myself, I permit everyone else—even my wife, little doctor.

ROKORO: That does seem . . . fair.

ARTHUR: If there is something indispensable to *your* happiness how can you justly deny it to someone else?

ROKORO: [*softly*] But is there nothing in you that has been hurt . . . that cries for revenge?

ARTHUR: [*pauses*] What is revenge but the expression of petty indignation? Suppose I do find it unpleasant? Shall I bluster and storm and wear myself out with regret?

ROKORO: It is good for people to bluster and storm . . . and regret.

ARTHUR: Murder and divorce, seven years of happi-

ness destroyed, and what not? No, little doctor, not I —not one who pretends to be *master* of his life.

[*Clemens enters at left.*]

CLEMENS: Your brother, master.

ARTHUR: [*quickly*] Who?

CLEMENS. Your brother, master.

ARTHUR: [*with an ironical laugh*] He heard it quickly. Show him in.

[*Clemens exits left. Rokoro starts to follow*] No, stay here. It will be funny. I can picture it in advance.

[*Raymond enters at left.*]

RAYMOND: You will wonder what brought me up here from the city again today?

ARTHUR: Not at all.

RAYMOND: [*to Rokoro*] Good evening, doctor. [*sits down breathlessly.*]

ARTHUR: It must be very unpleasant news you bring me—from your appearance.

RAYMOND: My dear Arthur, how unfair you are to me. You will soon perceive it is purely out of brotherly affection that I am here again today.

ARTHUR: You say that beautifully. How a noble sentiment does transfigure one. Didn't you bring your dear wife along?

RAYMOND: This affair must be discussed between us alone. [*To Rokoro*] Will you be good enough to excuse us, my dear doctor?

ARTHUR: The dear doctor will remain. [*Rokoro goes back among the books.*]

RAYMOND: But this is a matter which certainly should not——

ARTHUR: [*carelessly*] But I know what it is.

RAYMOND: You——?

ARTHUR: [*interrupts*] We were just talking about it.

RAYMOND: [*incredulously*] I can scarcely believe——

ARTHUR: Yes. You mean about my wife and Thompson, don't you?

RAYMOND: [*nonplussed*] Yes, but——

ARTHUR: Well, you needn't have troubled to come about that.

RAYMOND: I heard it from Smithers, the editor of the Daily News, who——

ARTHUR: Isn't that the same brave fellow whom you incited against me in the matter of the hospital?

RAYMOND: Most certainly not *incited.* He considered it his duty——

ARTHUR: There are so many honorable souls in the world.

RAYMOND: Moreover, he is sorry now——

ARTHUR: Since the millionaire——

RAYMOND: And he wants to prove how much he regrets the incident.

ARTHUR: Oh!

RAYMOND: Yes, that is why he came to me at once. The whole city knows it. You can fancy for yourself what a scandal. But he, to atone for a previous misunderstanding, is quite willing to suppress all news of this unfortunate affair in his newspaper. And he hopes also, to be able to persuade the other newspapers not to print it. I thanked him in your name, and then I came to you with all speed, so that in this trying moment I might be at your side.

ARTHUR: With all speed!

RAYMOND: Yes.

ARTHUR: Didn't you stop to talk about it first with your dear wife?

RAYMOND: Naturally.

ARTHUR: Do tell me what she said.

RAYMOND: She was astounded, of course. And, like me, she was of the opinion that I should go to you at once. You have our sincerest sympathy in this breaking up of your heretofore happy household. It is a sad calamity, brother. Our family lawyer is a man of wide experience and the utmost tact. I think you could do no better than to go to him.

ARTHUR: But my dear brother, you don't suppose I am going to be divorced?

RAYMOND: What then?

ARTHUR: Whatever put that into your head?

RAYMOND: But two hundred people saw it.

ARTHUR: Saw what?

RAYMOND: Your wife leaving a bedroom window of Thompson's house.

ARTHUR: [*impatiently*] Well?

RAYMOND: And a man's bathrobe thrown hastily over her shoulders. Pardon me, but there were really at least two hundred people.

ARTHUR: [*with affected gaiety*] Well, my dear Raymond, it is quite obvious that she had a *rendezvous* with Thompson.

RAYMOND: Well!

ARTHUR: Yes. Does that startle you?

RAYMOND: [*springs to his feet; glares at Arthur, paces up and down*] But that is——

ARTHUR: And tell me this—what business is it of yours? If my wife suits me, and Thompson, too, what has anyone else in the world to do with it?

RAYMOND: Unheard of!

ARTHUR: Don't pretend to be surprised. Come, you are a man of the world. Isn't it quite a common thing? Isn't one man out of every three betrayed by his wife?

[*smiles at Raymond suddenly*] Not you! One has only to *see* your wife to know *she* is virtuous.

RAYMOND: [*still pacing up and down*] I deny that the world is as immoral as that. I am horrified to——

ARTHUR: [*warmly*] Yes, horrified! You only wait for a chance like this, and the moment it comes you are all aquiver with ecstacy at the chance to be virtuously horrified. [*breaks out angrily*] *Be* horrified! You and your wife and all your kind! *Be* horrified! But I don't want your sympathy. At the bottom it is only malice. That is why you are here so quickly. [*recovers his composure; resumes his former bantering tone*] I am sorry to disappoint you, but I am not a bit horrified, brother. You see, before I was married I said to myself —— "Now consider. Many men have been betrayed before you; and unless you are exceptionally lucky, you, too, will be betrayed. Consider if this woman is so dear to you that you are satisfied to bear betrayal for her sake." And now, because things have happened just as I anticipated, shall I lament and destroy my household? That would be rather illogical, wouldn't it?

RAYMOND: You have lost your senses.

ARTHUR: Everyone is crazy who does not accept your false standards of morality.

RAYMOND: If you believe I will tolerate this——

ARTHUR: [*derisively*] *You?*

RAYMOND: You bear my name, and if *you* have no consideration for our honor——

ARTHUR: I have none at all.

RAYMOND: [*earnestly*] Arthur, I know you. You were just the same when a boy. You don't really mean what you say; you are only pretending so as to show how independent and strong you are, and above everybody's opinion. That gratifies you beyond——. But, Arthur,

I beg of you, I appeal to you, forget what has taken place between us, and hear me now. Believe me, I mean it for your good. Arthur, this involves your honor as a man.

ARTHUR: I have no honor; I want none; I need none.

RAYMOND: [*earnestly*] But Arthur——

ARTHUR: Honor is other people's judgment of me. I repudiate that.

RAYMOND: And their ridicule and scorn?

ARTHUR: In my own house I will know how to prevent it; outside I shall not hear it.

RAYMOND: And your own feelings?

ARTHUR: My own feelings are that if I am outraged and distressed you old maids will exult in it, and if I am not a bit outraged or distressed you will be disappointed. That satisfies me.

RAYMOND: [*in a burst of anger*] So you really mean to keep this *harlot* in your house, after——

[*Rokoro, who has been listening with absorbed interest near the bookshelves, springs upon Raymond with an exclamation of rage, and strikes him in the mouth with his clenched fist.*]

ARTHUR: Stop!

[*Rokoro turns to him wonderingly. Raymond staggers back nursing his lip.*]

Don't do that. He means well. To him she *is* that. Everything is relative, you know. [*to Raymond*] You must pardon our colleague, brother, for he is not quite civilized. But what else were you going to say? [*Rokoro goes back among the books.*]

RAYMOND: [*straightening his cravat; erect with dignity*] I have nothing more to say in this house. [*reaches for his hat.*]

ARTHUR: That's just what I thought when you first came in. [*Katherine enters at left.*]

RAYMOND: I will see to it that——[*stops as he sees Katherine.*]

KATHERINE: Am I intruding?

RAYMOND: [*greets her*] My dear sister-in-law. [*goes up to her with outstretched hand.*]

ARTHUR: Hypocrite! [*steps between them and points to the door*] Get out of here! [*Raymond glares hatefully at him, then exits left.*]

KATHERINE: [*puzzled, slowly*] I——

ARTHUR: [*coolly*] Did you want anything?

KATHERINE: The powder for the boy in seven.

ARTHUR: [*takes phial from a cabinet and brings it to her*] Here. Anything else?

KATHERINE: [*looking him squarely in the eyes*] No. If *you* have nothing.

ARTHUR: [*returning her gaze, lightly laughs*] And now you think the *big* scene is coming. Child, if it were, I wouldn't have thrown out the audience.

KATHERINE: You are in a very good humor.

ARTHUR: Why not? [*they look at each other steadily. Arthur is first to turn away*] I will go up directly to see how that boy is getting along. [*Katherine bows her head, exits left.*]

ARTHUR: [*looks after her, frowning, takes a deep breath, comes down to centre as he speaks with affected lightness*] People like my brother are really a blessing in the world. He has revived all my good spirits. [*Rokoro comes down to join him*] Tell me, little doctor, was that a jab or an uppercut you hit him? It was very good of you.

ROKORO: [*grins as he looks inquiringly up into Arthur's face*] You are glad I hit him, eh? Is that consistent?

Curtain

ACT III

The scene is unchanged.
The time is the next morning.

As the curtain rises Arthur is pacing reflectively up and down the room. Clemens enters, carrying a salver with a card upon it.

ARTHUR: Well, what is it now? Why are you always disturbing me?

CLEMENS: A gentleman to see you, master.

ARTHUR: I won't see anyone now.

CLEMENS: That is what I told him, sir, but he insisted on sending his card in.

ARTHUR: [*takes the card and reads it*] Mortimer Weeks, Editor the Faun! I don't know him. . . . Well, show him in. [*He throws the card on the table and busies himself there, with his back to the door.*]

[*Clemens exits at left, and in a moment re-enters, showing in Weeks.*]

[*Weeks is twenty, very fat, very blond, very rosy; he has a slow-witted, embarrassed stare; he wears a high collar, a broad black cravat tied in a flowing bow; and he sniffs intermittently like one with catarrhal trouble. He remains standing at the door; bows profoundly and waits. Arthur does not turn.*]

WEEKS: Professor Wessley, I believe.

ARTHUR [*picks up the card and turns to him, amused*] Mr. Mortimer Weeks? [*Weeks bows again*] Editor the Faun.

WEEKS: And anarchist.

ARTHUR: Really?

WEEKS: I am not permitted to put that on the card. My uncle forbids it.

ARTHUR: What can I do for you?

WEEKS: [*pompously*] I am here, Professor Wessley, in the——

ARTHUR: Won't you sit down?

WEEKS: Thank you. [*sits*]. I am here in the name of Youth.

ARTHUR: [*proffers cigar box*] Do you smoke?

WEEKS: Oh! Thank you, very much. [*takes a cigar.*]

ARTHUR: [*gives him a light*] Here!

WEEKS: Thank you. [*smokes awkwardly.*]

ARTHUR: Now what is this about Youth?

WEEKS: I came as the spokesman of Youth——

ARTHUR: Yes?

WEEKS: The combined Radical Youth of our city——

ARTHUR: Oh!

WEEKS: To express our admiration for your courage.

ARTHUR: [*surprised*] My courage?

WEEKS: We mean, too, to present you with an engraved testimonial of our esteem. All the newspapers, you know, have combined to keep the matter secret, so we first heard about it only last night. But I was sent here to assure you that in your brave fight you may count on us. The combined Radical Youth of the community is behind you. [*sniffs.*]

ARTHUR: I am honored, of course, and I thank you——

WEEKS: Pardon me, it is no more than our duty.

ARTHUR: But, my dear Mr. Weeks, will you be good enough to explain what you mean? I don't quite realize what it is you are praising me for.

WEEKS: Oh, you are too modest, Professor!

ARTHUR: Not at all, Mr. Weeks, but what is it all about?

WEEKS: [*with unction*] You have performed an undying service for liberty. You have struck a blow for the freedom of all humanity. In the next number of The Faun . . . Do you know The Faun, Professor?

ARTHUR: I am a bit remiss in literary affairs. I am sorry.

WEEKS: Pray, don't mention it. As I was saying, in the next issue of The Faun I mean to give the whole noble story out to the world. The Faun wears no reactionary muzzle! The world shall applaud your heroic attitude toward your wife, that——

ARTHUR: [*sharply*] My wife!

WEEKS: That when you conceded to her the right of untrammeled, sexual freedom——[*his voice falters as he sees Arthur rise quickly.*]

ARTHUR: Are you crazy?

WEEKS: [*rises too; frightened*] But, Professor——

ARTHUR: Do you mean to print such stuff as that in your—— [*stops short; looks at Weeks gloweringly; then, after a short pause, speaks curtly*] Let me understand. What have you been told? And who has told you?

WEEKS: [*stammering and sniffing*] Your own brother . . . the Director of Health . . . he himself said so——

ARTHUR: Yes.

WEEKS: Only last night he was telling——

ARTHUR: Telling what?

WEEKS: But everybody in town knows about the fire at the villa.

ARTHUR: Yes.

WEEKS: And, naturally, people asked your brother questions. And he gave them to understand that you——

ARTHUR: Go on. That I?

WEEKS: [*encouraged*] That you were of the belief that every wife has the right——

ARTHUR: [*his voice encouraging but ironical*] Yes, has the right——

WEEKS: Has the right to do as she pleases—that's what he said—to do as she.... [*sniffs*] pleases. He was very much disgusted, naturally. That clique of professors are always opposed to a new idea.

ARTHUR: But the Youth are in favor of it.

WEEKS: [*sniffs; his composure recovered*] Unqualifiedly! We believe that woman is a polyandrist born, and to limit her to but one man is a species of sexual slavery that——

ARTHUR: Never mind your beliefs now, Mr. Weeks. Tell me more about what you have heard.

WEEKS: Well, my chum Snorkins he heard it from his father—his father is assistant Register of Wills, you know—and his father was present when your brother was talking about it with some people in the City Hall. [*sniffs, breathless*] Well, as soon as my chum Snorkins heard it he came running to us. It fell like a bombshell among us comrades, you know. We had no idea that free thought existed like that outside our Society. It was so important that we decided to call a special meeting at once. I, Snorkins—we two are the leaders—then there is Schroeder, the cake-baker's son—you must know him——

ARTHUR: I know the cakes.

WEEKS: The entire membership attended, but of the ladies Miss Pomponia was the only one who came. It was too late for the rest to get—you know most of

them live at home with their parents. [*sniffs*] But we are sure the absent ones were with us in spirit and entirely in accord with——

ARTHUR: Who is Miss Pomponia?

WEEKS: Anrita Pomponia. She dances at the Apollo —a truly pagan soul, great breadth of mind. She made a stirring speech. [*sniffs*] You should have heard her, Professor. It was she who named it an Act of Heroism. The meeting was most enthusiastic. We were unanimously of the opinion that your heroism——

ARTHUR: Heroism! Pah!

WEEKS: Marked an epoch in the history of Eugenics; that woman is now sexually free [*sniffs*] and unashamed —that is what Miss Pomponia said. And it was quite obvious, quite obvious that everyone agreed with her, not only because of the ovation with which her words were received, but because I was immediately appointed a committee of one to call on you, and because a motion was also passed that an artistic testimonial of the resolution be inscribed and presented to you. And it was also resolved that the matter be given the praise and publicity it deserves in the next issue of The Faun. [*sniffs and warms up to his subject*] Moreover, it was resolved that our Society be renamed the Wessley Freedom Circle in your honor; and I am empowered to tender you the honorary presidency.

[*Arthur is watching him with mixed irritation and amusement.*]

We hope the example you have set will be followed; that it will inspire the unenlightened and encourage the faint-hearted to revolt——

ARTHUR: But what do you want to revolt for?

WEEKS: What then?

ARTHUR: It seems such a pointless thing to do.

WEEKS: I catch your meaning. Yes; it is true that everyone is a radical these days. Most things have already been revolted out of existence. But honor!—that is still an existing sentiment. There are many who cling to the obsolete notions of honor. You should hear how they talk about you in the city.

ARTHUR: And so your . . . radical organization holds me out—so to speak—as the first dishonorable man of the world.

WEEKS: But——!

ARTHUR: Let us not be ashamed of our names.

WEEKS: Aha! [*sniffs.*]

ARTHUR: [*ruefully*] I see there is still a broad field before me. Mr. Weeks, you look to me like a bright young man.

WEEKS: Oh, I beg of you!

ARTHUR: And so I am sure that you will be willing to concede that your sympathy for me and my . . . heroism, as you are good enough to call it, is purely of the theoretical sort.

WEEKS: In the very nature of things it must be so.

ARTHUR: Precisely. Nevertheless your sympathy honors and touches me. But, Mr. Weeks, if you and your young friends will be guided by me as an older man, who has had some little experience, do not get excited over this affair. It is nothing extraordinary, my young friend, for a man to be betrayed by his wife.

WEEKS: Yes, but to forgive her! Freely and with dignity! To say she had the right!

ARTHUR: To say she had the right! Yes, perhaps that is a new variation. But I am not so sure it would be well to make a principle of it.

WEEKS: [*rises; aggrieved*] Oh, you are only making fun of me.

ARTHUR: Why do you say that?

WEEKS: We meant well. But I see you do not need us. We had believed that now, when everyone else is misunderstanding you and ridiculing you, you would be pleased to know that there are some young people who stand by you.

ARTHUR: And are proud of my dishonor.

WEEKS: We were proud. If I have offended you——

ARTHUR: Not at all. I think I understand you, Mr. Weeks. You are young and untamed. You have the instinctive hatred of youth for the stupidity of the masses, the tyranny of laws, the shackles of conventions. Preserve your hatred of these things; it is perhaps the best thing you own. Always do what you conceive to be free and right, but don't, my boy, don't try to persuade others to do it. Because for them it may not be free and right at all, but, on the contrary, utterly false and wrong. No law can govern every case, no rule every circumstance. . . . If a wife betrays her husband, it may be despicable of her, it may be noble or it may be utterly indifferent. It depends entirely upon the man, the woman and what the circumstances were, the truth of which no one can know except the people themselves concerned. If you set up laws and precedents they must be false because every case requires a separate law. This is true of your radical laws as well as reactionary ones. Give up your debating societies and your dream of enlightening the world. If you must fight, fight for the principle that no man shall take it upon himself to judge another. Fight for that . . . But without societies, without debates, my dear Mr. Anarchist . . . And now give my thanks to your friends. It was very good of them. [*shakes hands*] And don't forget to send me a copy of The Faun.

WEEKS: [*a bit bewildered*] I shall, thank you.

ARTHUR: [*in a tone of dismissal*] Good day, Mr. Weeks. [*crosses to the larger table.*]

WEEKS: Good day, Professor Wessley. Thank you. [*he bows clumsily and exits at left.*]

[*Arthur looks after him, smiling until he has gone. Then his face becomes suddenly serious. He grasps the back of a chair with a strong grip, braces his knee against the padded side and stands staring gloomily before him.*]

[*Ida enters at left with letters, and waits. Seeing he does not notice her, she puts the letters on the table.*]

ARTHUR: [*finally seeing her*] Oh! Thank you. [*begins to sign the letters.*]

IDA: And will you go over the records, please? [*indicates a long list she has in her hand.*]

ARTHUR: Why, that is for Mrs. Wessley to do.

IDA: Mrs. Wessley gave them to me today.

ARTHUR: Very well. [*continues to sign.*]

IDA: I wanted to tell you, master, that Dr. Evans and I have decided.

ARTHUR: Suddenly you find courage! Was it the good example you just witnessed in this household? Well . . . congratulations; and don't make it too hard for poor Evans.

IDA: We wished to ask you, master——

ARTHUR: [*interrupts irrascibly*] Some other time, please.

[*He signs the last letter and leaves the table. Ida takes the letters and goes up left. At the door she meets Katherine entering, permits her to pass, then exits.*]

ARTHUR: [*sees Katherine; surprised*] Oh! [*waits until Ida has gone; then lightly*] Is there anything you want?

KATHERINE: [*looks at him searchingly; shakes her head*] I have been through the entire building. Everything is in order. I believe the boy in seven is doing nicely, but Dr. Rokoro will tell you better about that. And here is the journal. I have examined it carefully. Everything is up to date. Here: I surrender it to you.

ARTHUR: How dramatic!

KATHERINE: Does that annoy you?

ARTHUR: Not at all. I beg your pardon.

KATHERINE: Can you spare me a little time now? [*sits down.*]

ARTHUR: Always, my dear. Five minutes ago you had a champion here. The Radical Youth have paid me a visit. [*goes to the cabinet.*]

KATHERINE: [*after a pause*] All the time yesterday I fancied you would come to me or send for me.

ARTHUR: No.

KATHERINE: No. But you did deem it fitting to discuss the matter first with your brother and then with Dr. Rokoro.

ARTHUR: My brother I laughed at and put out of the house. And Rokoro—well—you know we often discuss abstract theories of life. But to talk it over the way you mean—that I have not done. I don't know why I should.

KATHERINE: Not even with me.

ARTHUR: [*somewhat uneasily, but trying to hide it*] It is hardly worth while, Katherine. I have——

KATHERINE: Yes, you have forgiven me, but——

ARTHUR: No; that is not the word. I have nothing to forgive. I am not outraged nor aggrieved. I con-

sider that you had the right to do what you did. That is my opinion. I did not think I needed to tell you that.

KATHERINE: Right! Wrong! That I shall have to decide for myself. But haven't I . . . Haven't I hurt you?

ARTHUR: [*shortly; crossly*] I am not sentimental. You might have discovered that in seven years.

KATHERINE: You said it often enough.

ARTHUR: And yesterday I proved it.

KATHERINE: [*sadly*] Yes; no one need pity you.

ARTHUR: No one shall.

KATHERINE: Then I really can't see why we shouldn't talk about it.

ARTHUR: I don't understand why it is so important to you to discuss this thing.

KATHERINE: Well, I must decide what is to be done now.

ARTHUR: If I must say it—*nothing* is to be done now. I concede you the right to this new pastime of yours. You can have anything else you like—a new limousine, a set of furs . . . I can deny you nothing [*ironically*] I love you so.

KATHERINE: [*bites her lip*] So you really believe I could have given myself to another man and still continued to live with you.

ARTHUR: You evidently believed it, too, until you were caught yesterday.

KATHERINE: Arthur, it was the first time. I see I must tell you how it came about.

ARTHUR: Do you suppose the details are of such absorbing interest to me?

KATHERINE: [*without heeding him*] You appeared to be very fond of Jean in the beginning, when he stuck to you though everyone else was against you.

ARTHUR: He used to amuse me. He took himself so seriously.

KATHERINE: And I used to pity him for the same reason. There was something desolate about him. He had never had anyone to care about him, no one to confide in or to trust.

ARTHUR: And that attracted you?

KATHERINE: Yes. For you see, Arthur, it was a new sensation to me to know that there was someone I could help . . . someone who came to me with his cares and was happier when I consoled him. I had never known that two people could be like that to each other . . . companions in the spiritual, the truest sense. You and I never were. That is how it began, I think—out of my sympathy for him. . . . Then there was something else. He took me in serious earnest; you used to laugh at me. He felt things as I felt them; and I could tell him things that would only have appeared ridiculous to you . . . and ridiculous to me, too, perhaps, had I tried to tell them to you——

ARTHUR: How touching!

KATHERINE: What was I to you but your assistant in charge of the patients? *You* had no need of me. You never need anyone. All people appear so small to you —insignificant and ludicrous. Perhaps they are. But if you could only have understood sometimes how your self-sufficiency left me . . . lonely . . . stifling . . . . as though I were alone on a high mountain in air too thin to breathe. If only you had understood, it might have been different. But you never understood. *He* did. *He* used to suffer when he saw me unhappy. *You*—had you known—would only have made a joke of it. *Him* my sorrows touched deeply.

ARTHUR: I have no heart. I've heard that before.

KATHERINE: His sympathy drew me gradually closer to him and away from you. When I look back I see that things had to happen just as they did. Then, too, I fancy it was due in a great measure to my desire to hurt you, to spite you, as it were. Yes, that too . . . to *spite* you. You were so sure of yourself—and of me. Often I used to tell myself, "Now he will be angered, now he will turn to me again." But the more I flirted with Jean the more you laughed or waxed sarcastic. That aroused the devil in me. It made me feel like a reckless, abandoned woman.

ARTHUR: You tried to make me jealous, I know.

KATHERINE: I wanted to see if it were really true that nothing can hurt you, if you really were so superior, so much greater than your humanity—as you pretend.

ARTHUR: And poor Thompson fondly dreams that you love him.

KATHERINE: Perhaps I do. Consider this: yesterday, while he was down in this room with you and I waited upstairs, I was in a perfect fever of anxiety. But my anxiety was for *him—only* for him. *You* I never was concerned about. [*watches him narrowly*] Are you angry because I tell you this?

ARTHUR: Still trying to find out if anything can hurt me?

KATHERINE: No, Arthur, that doesn't matter any more. I have been telling you these things because I wanted you to understand why I must leave you.

ARTHUR: [*rises; amazed*] Leave me?

KATHERINE: Yes, Arthur, that is what I came to tell you. I cannot stay in this house another night.

ARTHUR: Isn't this . . . sudden?

KATHERINE: I should have known it long ago. Yesterday it all broke out in me. And so I am going.

ARTHUR: [*pacing up and down the room; speaks without emotion*] It is very difficult to understand. First you betray me. Then, because, instead of becoming violent about it, I view your offense philosophically and let it pass, you are not satisfied. You propose to leave me because I am not in a rage or in despair. Is that right?

KATHERINE: You are trying to distort the truth so as to put yourself in the right and be able to laugh. You always do . . . But you cannot confuse me this time. What you say will not matter. Think me petty, if you choose . . . or even . . . despicable. It doesn't matter. It is time I began to think of my own happiness. I have no more time to lose. Half my life is wasted already.

ARTHUR: [*stung by the realization that she means it; comes toward her; speaks with reproachful sincerity*] *Wasted,* Katherine? Surely not *wasted!* . . . Perhaps I may have unwittingly treated you badly. . . . You will concede, I hope, that I never *intentionally* made you unhappy. However, that may be, *wasted* is the wrong word. Stop to think, Katherine. We have been living together seven years. That is a long time—seven years; and . . . and you have been of incalculable help to me.

KATHERINE: To your patients.

ARTHUR: I wasn't thinking of that. I mean you have . . . you have worked with me . . . yes . . . step by step you have helped to build up the whole structure of my achievements. In everything your efforts counted. Today, when I look back, I can't truthfully say how much of our success was due to me and how much to you.

[*Stops; sees that this leaves her unmoved. It is easy to see that pleading for anything is irksome to him; yet he plunges hurriedly on another tangent.*] That isn't all, Katherine. I have always cared for you very much . . . more than I ever supposed I could care for anyone. To be sure, it was in my fashion . . . which is not demonstrative . . . no . . . not demonstrative . . . but I cared intensely. And you, if you will only remember it, Katherine, you loved me, too. . . . So when you suddenly discover after seven years that your life has been *wasted*—I cannot understand it. I have always been happy with you . . . happy as a man could be. And to you it was only a waste of life! [*turns away from her and goes up stage, as if ashamed of his emotions*] Still, I thank you for being truthful to me. That is the single duty we owe each other—the truth.

KATHERINE: [*sits quite still, her head in her hands*] If we had *always* been truthful! If only we hadn't deceived each other! There was never any truth in our relations, Arthur, *never.*

ARTHUR: It only seems so to you *now.* You are nervous and upset.

KATHERINE: The way you spoke to me just now. It was very queer . . . I seemed to be listening to a total stranger. You never talked to me like that before, never in the whole seven years.

ARTHUR: What you complain of is that I can't make pretty speeches. When you talk about an emotion you only stifle it. Words only deafen the senses. This talk, too, is superfluous.

KATHERINE: [*sadly*] I suppose it is. Then let us part friends. [*rises.*]

ARTHUR: Is it so easy for you?

KATHERINE: I don't know. As you say, I am nervous and upset. Perhaps later I shall see more clearly. I only see now that I must leave you. [*goes to the window.*]

ARTHUR: I cannot keep you against your will . . . and do not wish to,

KATHERINE: [*nods sadly*] No.

ARTHUR: [*paces up and down the room. The finality toward which the affair has turned does not please him. He seeks to re-open the discussion*] Why do you say we have never been truthful? What did you mean by that?

KATHERINE: [*comes slowly down to him*] You never knew me. In seven years you did not learn to know me. It was partly my fault—in the beginning—I started wrongly. I deceived you.

ARTHUR: How did you deceive me?

KATHERINE: By pretending to be what I was not. I was so young when we first met, and you were so strong and impressive, so cheerful, so sure of yourself . . . I cannot tell you with what awe and admiration I regarded you. It seemed to me that to become self-sufficient and strong like you was the greatest thing to be desired. Often, as your little assistant, I used to sit near you, silently worshipping and imitating you. Do you remember how apt I was, how quick to understand the most complicated apparatus? . . . And sometimes you used to mock me in your sarcastic way because I was so prudish . . . or you would tell me about your life—how you ran away from your stern father and came over the sea . . . over the wide sea. It was all so wonderful, so *big* to me! . . . Do you remember how you used to say to me, "Go among people smiling and unafraid. Ask nothing of life, and you will owe

life nothing." Do you remember? . . . That was how I pretended to be. How foolish I was!

ARTHUR: [*approaches her, touches her hair lightly*] How you excite yourself, Katherine, all for nothing!

KATHERINE: [*moves away from his touch*] No, Arthur, don't think that. Don't believe that if you are considerate and tender now . . . That can't make any difference. It is too late.

ARTHUR: Has my conduct been so unpardonable, Katherine?

KATHERINE: No, it's not that. It is simply that you have no more power over me.

ARTHUR: [*softly*] And . . . he?

KATHERINE: Yes, he can do with me what he will—just as you could long ago.

ARTHUR: [*after a pause, during which he seems to be forcing himself to say something*] If it was my fault, it was not in the way you suppose. Hereafter I shall have to be more considerate of you. You don't seem to understand yourself—quite.

KATHERINE: [*shakes her head*] But you cannot help me.

ARTHUR: And for these trifling misunderstandings can you turn your back on your whole life? Your pleasure in our work, our achievements, your pride in our little home, our establishment that we have built up, you and I, between us—do these things mean nothing to you any more?

KATHERINE: [*bitterly*] They never meant anything to me—never. Not your work, not your sick, none of it! I tolerated them only to please you, to be useful to you, to grow closer to you—that was why. But I hate them now because . . . because you don't mean anything more to me.

ARTHUR: [*in a sudden burst of rage*] I'll not *let* you go away.

KATHERINE: [*scornfully*] Oh!

ARTHUR: You shan't go to *him.* [*She starts to go; he bars the way; she tries to pass him.*]

KATHERINE: Please!

ARTHUR: [*brutally*] You are going to stay here. [*as she tries to pass him he grasps her arm roughly.*]

KATHERINE: [*crying out with pain*] Oh! You are hurting me.

[*Arthur releases her and steps back, leans against the big table, fumbling at his collar hotly, then in a rage sweeps the vase to the floor, where it breaks to pieces with a crash. Instantaneously he recovers his composure and goes to the window slowly, his back to Katherine.*]

KATHERINE: [*after a long pause, during which she looks at him yearningly*] Too late, Arthur. If I had seen you like this but once, only *once,* in the past seven years, *once* to be overcome by emotion! Still, what hurts you more than losing me is seeing me go to a man who appears so insignificant to you. You can't care for people. All you desire is the sensation of strength and mastery over your life. But I can't be like that. I don't want to be—now. And so I am going to a man who is like myself . . . yes, who has sorrows that he *feels* and will share with me. And who can *love,* Arthur. I can be something to him because he don't consider himself——

ARTHUR: [*turns; interrupts her, banteringly*] You mean *doesn't,* my dear. Pardon me for correcting you, but *don't* is a contraction of the words "do not." One wouldn't say, "He do not consider."

KATHERINE: Ah! The master is himself again. [*goes reluctantly to the door at left.*]

ARTHUR: Indeed.

KATHERINE: Now you have a new theme to discuss with Dr. Rokoro.

ARTHUR: When do you go?

KATHERINE: At once.

ARTHUR: I will send for my lawyer tomorrow.

KATHERINE: Very well.

ARTHUR: [*detaining her*] One thing more. I have a last request to make. Will you leave me Titus? The beast is so used to me, he won't be able to tolerate a *new* master. Dogs *are* like that, you know.

KATHERINE: [*nods assent; then softly*] Good-bye, Arthur; I wish you much happiness.

ARTHUR: Melodramatic again! Perhaps Thompson will permit us to see each other once in a while—just as good neighbors, you know. I suppose we shall be neighbors.

KATHERINE: Perhaps. [*She starts to go out, but half-unwillingly turns to him again.*]

ARTHUR: [*starts toward her; checks himself with an effort*] Now is the moment for me to throw out my arms and cry, "Do not leave me! Stay, Katherine! Forgive me! Katherine, I love you!" Isn't that what you turned back for?

KATHERINE: [*sorrowfully*] Be happy, Arthur. [*exits slowly at left.*]

ARTHUR: [*stares after her; laughs wildly*] *Ha!* [*he rings for the servant; sits at the table, pretending to be working. Ida enters from left.*]

IDA: Clemens is in the garden. Is there anything *I* can do?

ARTHUR: [*at the table; keeping still with difficulty*] Oh! I want you. You must take over the work of inspection, all my wife's work, in fact. . . . My wife is going away . . . In other words . . . we have separated. . . . God! Don't make such a stupid face. Such things happen. You will understand better after you are married . . . And ask Dr. Rokoro if he won't see me in here for a moment. . . . And have those pieces removed. The vase was smashed.

[*Ida stoops to gather the fragments of the vase. Suddenly she begins to sob violently. Arthur looks up wonderingly.*]

Ida, what is the matter?

IDA: [*sobbing*] You must be very unhappy, master.

ARTHUR: Why?

IDA: If only you wouldn't fight back your feelings, it wouldn't hurt you so much.

ARTHUR: [*crossly*]. Will you call Dr. Rokoro, please?

[*Rokoro enters at left.*]

I was just sending for you, little doctor.

[*Ida exits, sobbing, with the fragments of the vase.*]

ARTHUR: Well, have you heard the news? [*Rokoro nods gravely*] It seems like a victory for you, doesn't it, my little philosopher?

ROKORO: [*approaches him solicitously, takes his hand and strokes it gently*] Not talk now, master. Talk later . . . tomorrow.

ARTHUR: You think utility has gone sadly astray, don't you? But I am not so sure. See! A man determines to solve each problem of his life by reason alone. His wife betrays him. And instead of killing her, or divorcing her, or killing himself, he forgives her. What happens? He is laughed at. Well, he expected that. *Honorable* people—of whom my irreproachable brother

is a sublime example—despise him. Well, he might have expected that, too. Then schoolboys, who have read their Plutarch without understanding it, come to him and honor him as their leader. He could even bear that. Next the wife, for whom he has done all this, reproaches him, leaves him in hate and goes to her lover. Even that is not so terrible . . . But when the two people who are of use to him—of bodily use, so to speak—are ashamed of him because he is not heartbroken . . . the last straw is reached. That is too much. [*sighs*] Nothing is left to me except Titus, the dog. The dog, after all, is the only philosopher among you. When you come to write your analysis of our Caucasian culture make a note of that dog, little doctor . . . And don't make me out too much of an ass in your book, will you? Put it milder. . . . Or at any rate, say I was a good surgeon. A surgeon needn't necessarily understand human nature. Or do you believe this is going to ruin my practice, too; that I had better go wandering with you——

ROKORO: [*pleadingly*] Master!

ARTHUR: Yes, this is the finish of your master. People can laugh now. If something goes wrong with a *poor* devil, everybody pities him; but who has pity for the strong? . . . Thank God I still have left my sense of humor. [*his thoughts appear to go to something else while he mechanically repeats*] Still my sense of humor!

ROKORO: [*crouches down beside him; grinning mirthlessly*] No more . . . today . . . about this . . . Will you read with me . . . something out of Nietzsche?

ARTHUR: Good chap! [*lost in thought again*] "Give me the man that is not passion's slave," says Hamlet. See! All my life I have schooled myself to be free of my

passions. And I *was* free. But who knows whether a slave would not have made my wife happier. Yes, for she lacked the power of reason . . . But, you little Jap, that doesn't prove my philosophy false. I began wrongly—that was all. The mistake lay in marrying a wanton——

ROKORO: [*springs up in disgust*] Ooh! [*moves quickly across the room, shuddering with disgust*] Ooh! [*points at Arthur accusingly*] You are not good . . . Yes . . . right! . . . She was right!

ARTHUR: You were always a bit in love with her.

ROKORO: [*frightened; denies it quickly; his finger raised as if swearing*] Never! But she was good . . . very good woman. [*approaches Arthur; points at him accusingly*] You are not good . . . I would not remain with you either. Ooh!

ARTHUR: Because I am not good?

ROKORO: [*sharply*] Yes.

ARTHUR: [*reproachfully*] Little doctor!

ROKORO: [*relenting*] True . . . you mean well . . . but your system . . . it is false. False! False! False all over! . . . If you love, you must be able to hate, too. Yes, on the other side of love there must be hate . . . and shoot, too, master . . . that goes with it. You must wish to shoot, if you love. . . . But to hold one's self so, in one's hand [*raises his clenched fist*] to be sure of one's self . . . always to be right . . . to be right over everyone . . . . always . . . that is not enough. No, it is not good just to be right . . . Better to give everything to someone . . . everything you have . . . to give so much that there is nothing left to give anyone else. That! That is good! No one must feel always "I am right."

ARTHUR: [*who has listened attentively; laughs softly*] And God, little doctor, what of Him?

ROKORO: He needs to be right . . . His business is to be right . . . but not for us. He sits above . . . Is it not so? . . . like a great Judge. He must see everything and understand . . . But a little horse who runs here below . . . shall he try to be like God? No . . . no . . . He can only . . . quick, quick . . . run, run . . . over the road of life . . . in what direction the reins are pulled. And passion pulls the reins . . . Difficult for me in English! . . . But do you see what I mean? He is the true master who runs bravest with his passions.

ARTHUR: [*reflecting*] Then, if I understand you rightly, man is not master of his life, but, rather a marionette.

ROKORO: Marionette! What is that?

ARTHUR: You.

ROKORO: What does it mean?

ARTHUR: It means what *you* make out a man to be. Do you know what a puppet is?

ROKORO: [*pleased*] Oh, yes. [*indicates with his finger*] So?

ARTHUR: [*watches the jumping finger*] Yes. Behind the wires are drawn. Cares, emotions, passions pull the wires, and accordingly the puppet dances. Isn't that what you mean?

ROKORO: [*rubs his hands with satisfaction*] Exactly . . . just exactly.

ARTHUR: And who knows? Perhaps it *is* a tragic mistake not to be a puppet.

ROKORO: Aren't we mortals better off for it? . . . To feel a power above us . . . beyond us . . . that pushes and pulls and drives . . . and we must do

what it wants . . . we cannot help ourselves . . . It is stronger than we. [*hesitates; looks self-consciously down as if he is ashamed of what he is about to say*] Master, don't try . . . any longer . . . to cut the wires with the scissors of your reason.

[*Looks up, sees that Arthur is no longer listening; stops talking, steps cautiously away, looks back at him again, then starts to go softly to the door.*]

ARTHUR: [*coming out of a reverie, during which he wipes his moist eyes with his hand*] Little doctor! [*turns to look at Rokoro, then settles back peacefully*] Don't go away. [*Rokoro comes back*] Stay here. I'd rather not be alone today. Isn't it stupid? Tomorrow —tomorrow I shall have myself in hand again.

ROKORO: [*cowers down at Arthur's feet like a faithful dog*] Dear master!

ARTHUR: [*reaches down; pulls Rokoro's ear; smiles wistfully*] Puppet! [*stares thoughtfully into the glowing end of his cigarette.*]

Curtain

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